



# Pleasantburg Drive Corridor Master Plan

**Final Report**  
May 2004

*Greenville, South Carolina*

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# Contents

## *Acknowledgements*

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 The Planning Process
- 1.3 The Role of this Master Plan
- 1.4 Organization of this Report

### 2.0 Context

- 2.1 Regional Patterns: Landmarks
- 2.2 Regional Patterns: Land Use & Development
- 2.3 Corridor Patterns: Projects & Initiatives
- 2.4 Corridor Patterns: Land Use & Development

### 3.0 Market Overview

- 3.1 Pleasantburg Drive Context
- 3.2 Previous Research Summary
- 3.3 National Demographic Trends
- 3.4 Corridor Strengths & Challenges
- 3.5 Market Overview
- 3.6 Recommended Revitalization Locations

### 4.0 Urban Design Plan

- 1 4.1 The Urban Design Plan Focus Areas 18
- 1 4.2 The Palmetto Expo Center Focus Area 19
- 2 4.3 The McAlister Square/Laurens Road Focus Area 27
- 2 4.4 Pleasantburg Drive 38

### 5.0 Implementation

- 3 5.1 A Hierarchy of Action 42
- 4 5.2 Standards & Regulations 43
- 5 5.3 Incentives 46
- 6 5.4 Organization 47
- 5.5 Funding 53
- 5.6 Implementation Summary 56

### 6.0 Action Plan

- 7
- 8 6.1 Organizational & Corridor-Wide Initiatives 57
- 8 6.2 Transportation Initiatives 58
- 10 6.3 Redevelopment Initiatives 61
- 12
- 16

## 1.1 Background

Pleasantburg Drive is Greenville's main north/south transportation corridor running through the geographic heart of the city. It connects from I-85 to I-385 and beyond to Wade Hampton Boulevard, touching many of Greenville's neighborhoods and institutions including Greenville Tech, McAlister Square Mall, the Palmetto Exposition Center, the Downtown Airport, and Bob Jones University.

From the 1960s through the 1980s, Pleasantburg Drive was the location of choice for retail and office activity in Greenville, drawing much of this activity out of Downtown. McAlister Square Mall served as the center of this activity. Yet, as new commercial and office development continued to relocate to new areas such as Haywood Mall and beyond, Pleasantburg Drive began a decline illustrated most notably with the closing of McAlister Mall.

Revitalization efforts have been underway. The Pleasantburg Drive Business Association was formed in 1997 providing an organized voice for the corridor. The City has led on-going efforts in a Façade Improvement Program, offering a matching grant for private improvements. The City has been working with property owners on a parcel-by-parcel basis to eliminate excessive driveways and improve streetscape. Greenville Tech has purchased and has renovated McAlister Square as a new educational center. The Palmetto Expo Center, recently purchased by the City is evaluating significant reinvestment to reposition this convention facility to meet current market conditions.

## 1.2 The Planning Process

The planning process was structured to include public involvement and participation as an integral part of the design and planning process. The three main components of this process were Advisory Group sessions, Stakeholder Interviews, and a multi-day Design Charrette.

### Advisory Group

The Pleasantburg Drive Advisory Group consisted of City representatives, property owners, developers, and neighborhood leaders. Several times over the planning process the project team met with and debriefed the Advisory Group on the plan's progress. This group provided guidance as to the direction and focus of the plan and its recommendations.

### Stakeholder Interviews

In order to understand the wide range of issues and conditions found within the corridor, the project team met one-on-one with corridor stakeholders. These stakeholders included property owners, developers, city staff, SCDOT, Greenville Tech, Bob Jones University, and the Expo Center. The interviews provided valuable insight and were critical to focusing the design efforts.

### Design Charrette

The design charrette was structured as a multi-day interactive planning effort that included internal team meetings, design work, stakeholder meetings, and community presentations. The charrette allowed the team to develop detailed planning and design recommendations in a multi-disciplinary and interactive environment.

## 1.3 The Role of this Master Plan

The purpose of this Master Plan is to build upon the efforts to-date while developing a comprehensive vision for the long-term revitalization and redevelopment of the corridor. This plan is structured to identify key private redevelopment opportunities and public improvements and then to organize and define a set of actions, both public and private, that will lead to revitalization.

This plan is not static. It simply establishes a foundation upon which future decisions are to be made. As market conditions change and redevelopment occurs, it will be necessary to periodically update the plan, evaluate its effectiveness and respond to unforeseen circumstances.

## 1.4 Organization of this Report

This report is organized into six sections:

1. *Introduction*: Describes the background and purpose of the Master Plan.
2. *Context*: Summarizes the existing conditions, current initiatives and development influences in the corridor.
3. *Market Overview*: Outlines national and regional trends, current market conditions, and redevelopment opportunities.
4. *Urban Design Plan*: Illustrates the immediate and long-range design recommendations, identifying key areas of focus.
5. *Implementation*: Outlines an overall approach to implementation at a range of scales with a particular focus on organizational strategies.
6. *Action Plan*: Lists the set of projects, actions and initiatives necessary to carry forward the recommendations of the plan.



CONTEXT



## 2.1 Regional Patterns: Landmarks

Pleasantburg Drive runs through the geographic center of Greenville. It is surrounded by and connects some of the City's important business, institutional and civic landmarks.

### Downtown Greenville

Downtown Greenville is the historic center of the city. It is the City's governmental and business center and is a significant regional attraction driven by the Bi-Lo Center Arena, hotel and convention facilities and Main Street's vibrant restaurant and retail activity.

### Greenville Tech

Greenville Tech plays an important educational role in the region serving over 50,000 full and part-time students. Its main campus is located on Pleasantburg Drive with additional facilities at McAlister Square and the McKinney Regional Automotive Technology Center, also on Pleasantburg Drive.

### University Center

The University Center, located at McAlister Square is a teaching and learning center for seven of the areas colleges and universities designed to serve working adults who are pursuing degrees.

### Palmetto Expo Center

Palmetto Expo Center owned by the City of Greenville is the largest convention facility in South Carolina. It provides a regional destination for corporate meetings, trade shows and special events with a focus on the manufacturing industry.

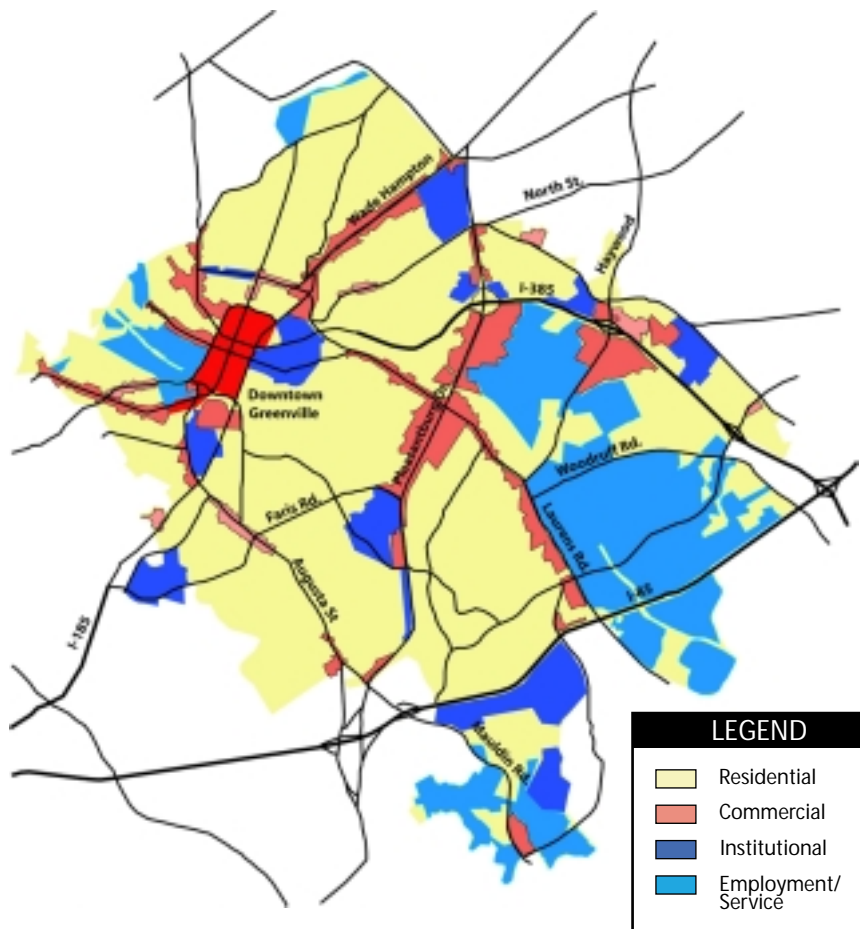
### Downtown Greenville Airport

Operated by the Greenville Airport Commission, the Downtown Greenville Airport is the state's busiest general aviation airport, and is home to 300 employees and more than 25 aviation-related businesses within the Pleasantburg Drive corridor.

### Bob Jones University

Bob Jones University is a private liberal arts, Christian university that enrolls 5,000 students and is located at Pleasantburg Drive and Wade Hampton Boulevard. The university also runs programs for flight training and aircraft maintenance from the Downtown Greenville Airport.





## 2.2 Regional Patterns: Land Use & Development

Greenville grew from its access and utilization of the Reedy River, and Downtown Greenville still serves as the cultural, civic and business center of the area. Yet today, accessibility and utilization of the region's interstate highway system and road network plays an equally important role in Greenville's land use and development pattern.

### Interstate 85

Interstate 85 connects Greenville to commerce and trade throughout the Southeast and drives the development of manufacturing and employment uses in southeast Greenville. The International Automotive Research Park (ICAR) a joint project between Clemson University and BMW is just one example.

### Commercial Corridors

Greenville's commercial corridors provide the retail and service "infrastructure" for the community. These corridors include Pleasantburg Drive, Augusta Road, Laurens Road, Pete Hollis Corridor and Haywood Road, among others. They are by nature auto-oriented, yet their roles and functions are constantly changing and redeveloping as market conditions shift.

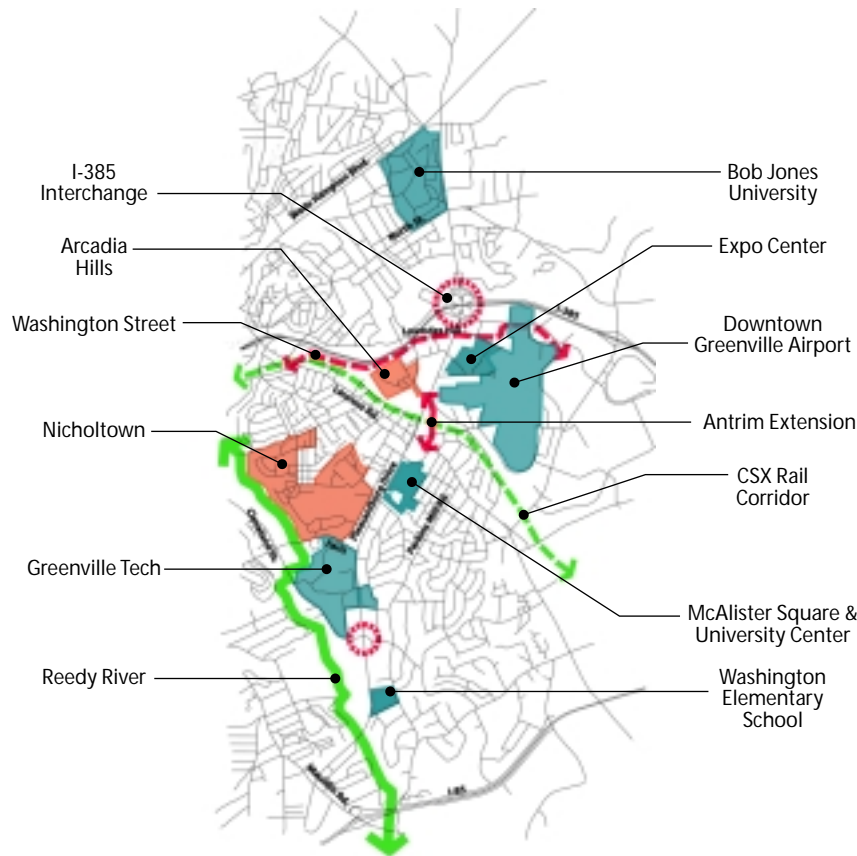
### Neighborhoods

Greenville's residential growth historically extended from downtown along trolley lines creating neighborhoods like Overbrook and Hampton-Pinckney among others. Over time suburban neighborhoods grew out along Greenville's major road corridors. Today, neighborhoods like Nicholtown and Gower are tied to Greenville's commercial corridors, such as Pleasantburg Drive, which provide access and daily services.

### The Role of Pleasantburg Drive

The role of Pleasantburg Drive has evolved significantly, once serving as the City's premiere suburban retail and office destination, now many of those uses have moved to Haywood Road, Woodruff Road and locations nearer to I-85. Pleasantburg Drive serves both a regional and local role. It is the location of regional institutions such as Greenville Tech, Bob Jones University, the Downtown Greenville Airport, and the Expo Center. Yet it is also the location of goods, services and places of employment for the surrounding neighborhoods. The challenge is to link these two roles together.





## 2.3 Corridor Patterns: Projects & Initiatives

### East Washington Street Extension

Proposed road improvement that provides a direct connection from Downtown Greenville to the Expo Center and Haywood Mall.

### Arcadia Hills Hope VI

\$28 million investment in redeveloped public housing project providing 217 single family and duplex residential units.

### Palmetto Expo Center

Proposed improvements include renovation of convention halls and exterior, relocation of Eisenhower Drive to create better visibility to Pleasantburg Drive, and future hotel development.

### Pleasantburg Drive Corridor Master Plan

### Nicholtown Neighborhood Master Plan

Neighborhood Plan and potential redevelopment of Jesse Jackson Townhomes.

### Antrim Drive Extension

Proposed extension of Antrim Drive that creates redevelopment opportunities and provides needed network.

### University Center/McAlister Square

Redevelopment of an aging mall into educational facilities, planned park and landscape improvements include a constructed wetlands park and trail system and a new "green".

### Cleveland Street Intersection Improvements

Recent improvements to grade/slope and the addition of left turn lanes onto Pleasantburg Drive.

### Washington Center & Elementary School

New schools currently under construction at Pleasantburg Drive and Windmont, replacing the Sara Collins Elementary School and relocating the Washington Center.

### CSX Rail Corridor

Abandoned rail corridor that has been proposed as a potential transit and/or greenway corridor.

### Reedy River Corridor

Proposed greenway corridor that connects from downtown Greenville to Cleveland Park and the Greenville Tech Campus.

### Access Management & Landscape Improvement Program

On-going, parcel-by-parcel, driveway consolidation, sidewalk and landscape improvements.

### I-385 Interchange Redesign

Redesign of the Pleasantburg Drive/I-385 interchange including new landscape treatments.

## 2.4 Corridor Patterns: Land Use & Development

### Commercial:

Retail and commercial uses extend along the corridor with concentrations focused at the major intersections such as Faris Road, Antrim Drive, Laurens Road, North Street and Wade Hampton Boulevard. Several retail centers along the corridor are in need of major redevelopment or have undergone redevelopment such as the Pleasantburg Shopping Center and McAlister Square Mall.

### Office Development:

Pleasantburg Drive is also an important office corridor with concentrations at I-385, south of Laurens Road, and south of Cleveland Street. As with the retail, there are emerging opportunities for office redevelopment throughout the corridor.

### Institutions:

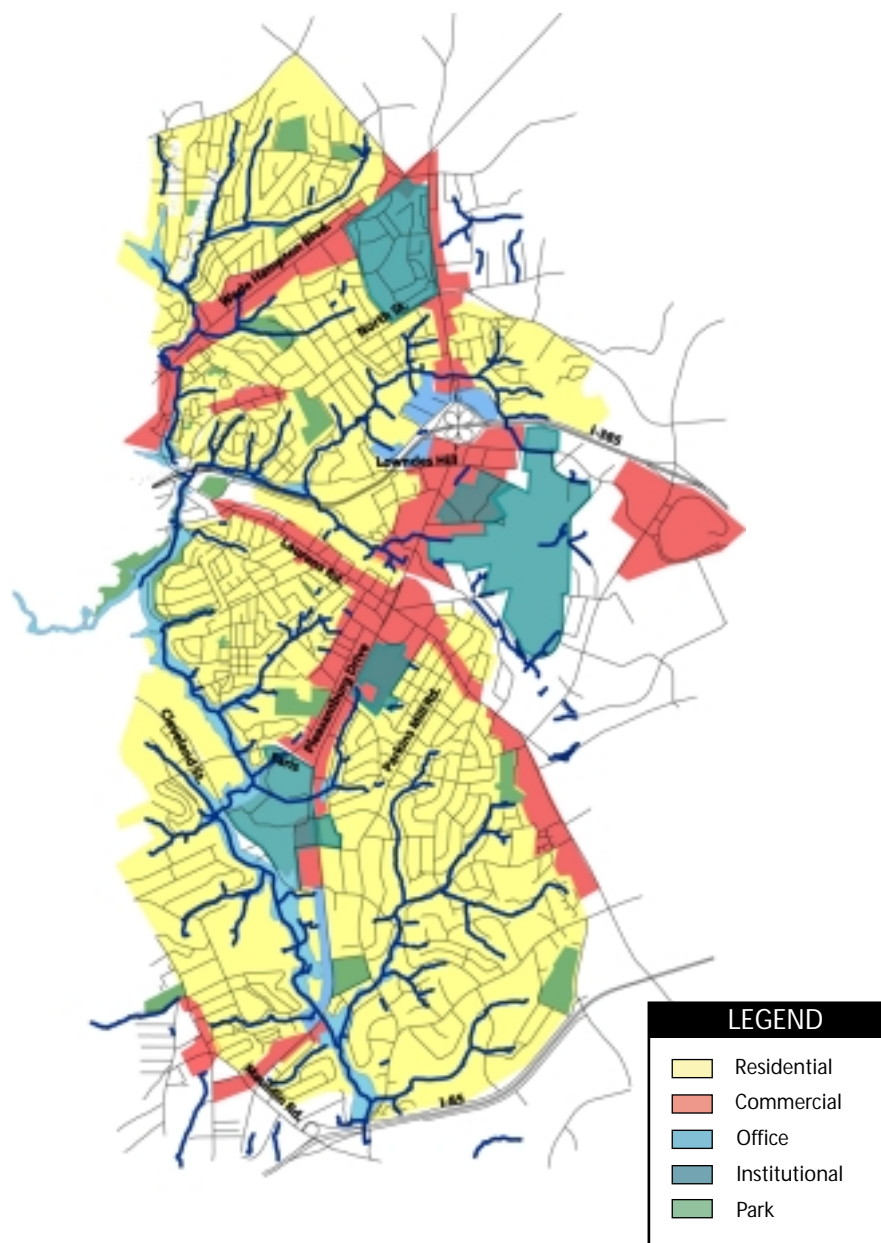
A number of major civic and academic institutions are located within the corridor including; Greenville Tech, Bob Jones University, the Expo Center, Downtown Greenville Airport, and the University Center. These institutions are a valuable resource and will contribute greatly to the process of shaping the character of the corridor.

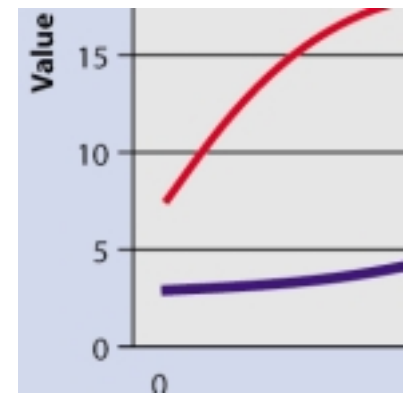
### Residential Areas:

The Nicholtown and Gower neighborhoods are the two largest neighborhoods adjacent to Pleasantburg Drive. The redevelopment of Pleasantburg Drive will provide opportunities to provide better connections from both neighborhoods to the corridor.

### Natural Systems:

There is a network of river and creek systems that extend throughout the Pleasantburg Drive corridor. The Reedy River extends from Downtown and Cleveland Park and connects to Greenville Tech providing, along with a number of other creeks and streams, the potential to create a system of greenway connections.



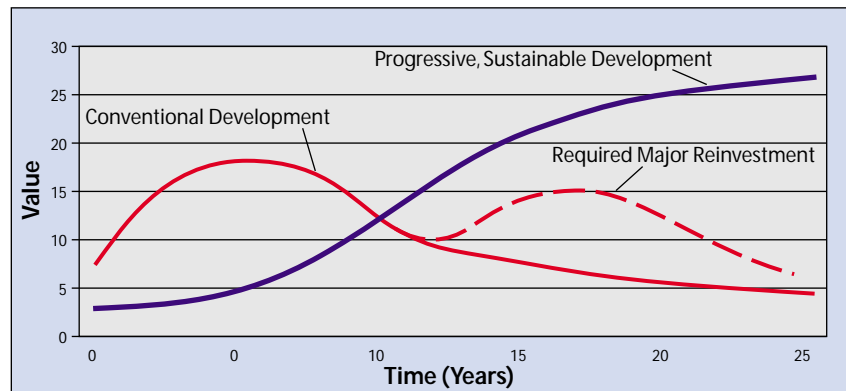


## MARKET OVERVIEW

## Market Overview

As part of the planning process, Robert Charles Lesser & Co., LLC (RCLCo) prepared an overview market analysis of the Pleasantburg Drive Corridor. Provided here is a summary of that analysis. RCLCo's complete report is provided as an appendix.

The objective of this initial market analysis is the identification of potential redevelopment opportunities in the corridor in terms of both location and land use. It is important to note that this market analysis should be considered preliminary and, in some cases, such as McAlister Square, Pleasantburg Shopping Center, and the Expo Center, more focused and detailed market analyses will likely be needed to more accurately identify levels of opportunity and development.



*Relationship of Time and Value for Conventional vs. Sustainable Development*

## 3.1 Pleasantburg Drive Context

The fate of Pleasantburg Drive retail has followed that of many other aging retail strips, where little sustainability was created to anchor markets and tenants to the area. Development of retail uses along the corridor was undertaken with a short-term finance perspective (typically five to seven years), as opposed to a longer-term vantage in which value increases over time. Many of these retail centers are being passed along to buyers increasingly unable to invest in these centers, with major deferred maintenance being the rule. The value of these centers over time has been lost.

By contrast, more sustainable development, which incorporates a mix of land uses, higher quality architecture and a pedestrian-oriented environment can see significant gains in long-term value. Major projects in Downtown areas, older inner-city suburban cores and more recent main street retail-focused projects are examples of more sustainable development.

## 3.2 Previous Research Summary

In June of 2001, Hammer, Siler, George Associates prepared an economic market study and offered recommendations for future development along the Pleasantburg Corridor. The recommendations included transitioning Pleasantburg Drive into a high technology corridor, repositioning the retail to serve the technology sector, and increasing convention traffic and expanding the hotel room supply. All of these recommendations were based on Pleasantburg attracting high technology companies. Given the recent troubles in the technology sector (technology bubble) and the tragic events of September 11, as well as the continuing struggles of the corridor over the past two years, these objectives have become increasingly difficult to achieve in a short-term timeframe and also appear to be challenging longer-term.

This current analysis focuses more on identifying redevelopment and revitalization opportunities in the corridor, building more on existing and likely market sources within the context of the local market, yet recognizing national trends that impact the corridor.

## 3.3 National Demographic Trends

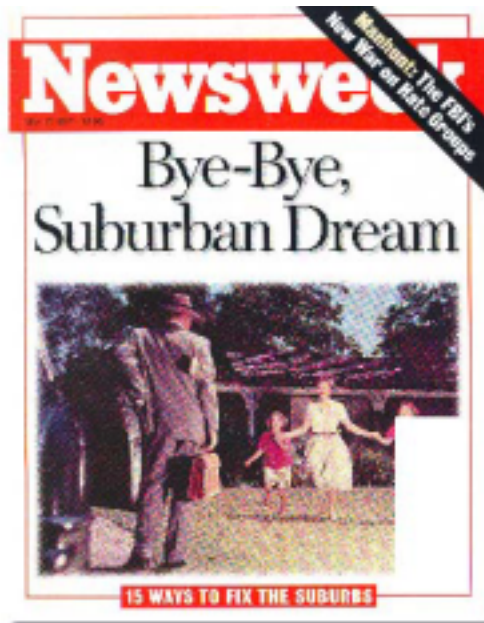
There are a number of major demographic shifts occurring in the U.S. today and over the next 10 years that could impact intown Greenville and the Pleasantburg Drive corridor. Understanding these trends is important as they potentially impact opportunities for intown housing and commercial uses. The following summarizes these trends.

### **The Growth of Smaller Households**

Nationally, between 1960 and 2000 one-person households grew from 13 percent of the nation's households to 26 percent of the population. Similarly, unmarried (roommate) households grew from 22 percent to 48 percent over the same time period. Going forward, it is anticipated that much of the national household growth within the next 10 years will likely be the result of increases in non-family, one-person and two-person households, including married childless couples (U.S. Census Bureau). Nationally, it is expected that households classified as families with children will decline in total numbers over the next 10 years as Baby Boomers (now in their 40s and early 50s) transition to Empty Nesters and Generation X (those in their 30s and late 20s) defer having children. These shifts are significant as singles and childless couples represent groups more readily attracted to smaller-lot single-family homes, attached townhouses and condominiums, and rental apartments; land uses typically found at infill locations like those along the Corridor.

## The Aging of the Baby Boomers

As the "Baby Boomer" generation continues to age, it is expected that over 50 percent of the National population will be over the age of 65 by the year 2020. From 2000 to 2010, the number of households over the age of 65 is expected to grow by close to 20%. This is again significant as these aging households will increasingly seek locations and housing products that simplify their lifestyle and needs.



## Increasing Interest in New and Old Urbanism

Americans, including those in the Southeast, are increasingly interested in more walkable, neighborhood-scaled environments. Included in these are newer Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) in suburban areas as well as infill and revitalization projects in more mature areas. The previously aforementioned demographic shifts are feeding into this housing shift, the evidence of which can already be seen in new and revitalized housing product Downtown and in surrounding areas. Previous RCLCo and national research indicates demand for new or older urbanism from up to one-third of households in a market.

The implications of these demographic shifts are wide and varied and tend to further support mixed-use development, specifically alternative housing options. Surveys indicate that many one and two-person households prefer housing other than traditional single-family detached products. Further, surveys have shown that ease of lifestyle, both in terms of location and housing product, becomes more significant for empty nesters and retirees. Both trends (seen locally and nationally) support the creation of a mixed-use development featuring attached residential product. In addition, these developments can feature easy walks to shopping, restaurants, and recreation, contributing to an easier lifestyle and sense of location missing on the Pleasantburg Drive Corridor today. Creating the right environment along Pleasantburg Drive, both on and off the corridor, to capitalize on these trends will be important to a successful revitalization strategy for the corridor.



## 3.4 Corridor Strengths and Challenges

The Pleasantburg Drive Corridor features a number of key strengths that represent building blocks and market sources for new development and revitalization. The educational resources of Greenville Tech and the University Center as well as Bob Jones University provide the corridor with a daytime and potential greater nighttime population of students and faculty. These education institutions also have potential access to resources necessary to initiate revitalization, as has already begun with Greenville Tech and the University Center at McAlister Square.



*Regional Patterns: Landmarks*

### Strengths

The corridor also features other market audiences that support revitalization, including a number of strong adjacent neighborhoods and revitalization efforts from the Greenville Housing Authority in redeveloping aging public housing complexes (Arcadia Hills underway and Jesse Jackson Townhomes upcoming). The corridor also has a moderate employment base (including office, industrial and government workers) and local and regional visitors to the Palmetto Expo Center. As identified in the earlier Hammer study, this facility has the opportunity to create spin-off development of accommodations and dining opportunities and could be a focal point for redevelopment. Similarly, the Downtown Greenville Airport brings exposure and familiarity to the corridor from corporate executives in the area.

The corridor is also well-positioned regionally to attract market audiences beyond those already exposed to Pleasantburg. The corridor crosses two interstates, providing strong regional access to households and businesses to the south and east. Additionally, the corridor is very close to Downtown Greenville and revitalizing intown neighborhoods and could leverage off of their momentum to further intown Greenville's renaissance.



## Challenges

Several key challenges exist to revitalization of the corridor as well. The corridor itself is large and for most travelers serves as a through function and less as a local corridor. There is also a poor relationship between the corridor land uses which are almost entirely commercial and the adjacent neighborhoods, with the two areas turning their back on one another and limiting physical and perceived connections.

A number of market concerns exist that impact Pleasantburg's future. These include highly competitive retail market, with an oversupply of larger "big box" space being satisfied elsewhere away from the corridor and low rents being the rule. The area's office market is also competitive, with product on the corridor becoming outdated and newer product Downtown and in the suburbs achieving modestly higher rents.

Finally, few large vacant properties exist along the corridor, necessitating potential land assemblage, demolition and likely public participation to spur redevelopment and revitalization.

All of these strengths and challenges point to real opportunities in the corridor that, with proactive involvement from the City and other entities, are achievable.



*Single use retail with no relationship to neighborhood*



*Lots of small retail parcels make redevelopment difficult*

## 3.5 Market Overview

### Retail

Once a prime commercial corridor, Pleasantburg has experienced significant cannibalization of its retail establishments and regional serving retail role. Most new retail proximate to the area has developed along Woodruff Road as many chains have replaced aging stores with newer ones and new entries into the market have placed strains on existing stores. In many cases, these newer stores have significant overlaps in their trade areas with Pleasantburg Drive, thus limiting the potential for these chains to open or reopen secondary stores on the corridor.

The Greenville retail market has become significantly oversupplied (a nation-wide issue as well), with area vacancy rates increasing from 4% four years ago to 12% today. In the Pleasantburg/Laurens submarket, the vacancy rate is a staggering 31%, making it the highest in Greenville. This high vacancy rate and older supply of space has resulted in very low average rental rates of \$9 per square foot.

The trends mentioned above plus the very old stock of retail stores suggest the Corridor is "under-demolished" meaning a significant portion of the retail in the corridor is more suitable for redevelopment. The opportunity for the corridor appears to be as more of a local-serving, neighborhood-oriented corridor with some potential regional users or locales. While most of the retail is suffering from abnormally high vacancies, there may be support for retail delivered in a more unique format, such part of a mixed-use environment, which creates an environment not currently found along Pleasantburg.

The presence of college students, strong and revitalizing neighborhoods, Palmetto Expo visitors and workers creates the potential for increased dining and light entertainment establishments (coffee shops and ice cream shops) as well as small independent retail uses such as bookstores, music stores, clothing stores, etc. not desiring a location in the larger retail and power centers found in the area today. To further a sense of location or uniqueness in the market, some of these uses could be developed around a park or water feature to create more of a sense of destination.

## Office

Even more significantly than the retail market, Greenville's office market is badly overbuilt in the short-term. The current overall vacancy rate in Greenville is now 24% and, even more severe, is the Pleasantburg Corridor, in which an estimated 36% of office space is currently vacant. Pleasantburg Drive's existing office product is generally older and does not include much, if any, higher-quality Class A space.

The lack of demand for space in the corridor is exacerbated by the low rents found throughout the Greenville office market. These low rents, which average around \$16 Downtown and \$15 for office space in the suburbs is not appreciably different from the rates offered along Pleasantburg, which typically average around \$12. As such, these other areas can offer a better value in terms of product. Pleasantburg's potential value lies in its location and regional access. This is negated, however, by the poor aesthetic quality of the corridor and the lack of a unique location or sense of place in the area. Thus, comparatively, Pleasantburg struggles to offer a sense of value monetarily or otherwise.

The most significant opportunities for office space in the corridor are for niche office users or spaces. Providing unique environments, including mixed-use projects, or targeting companies most strongly relating to Greenville Tech appear to be important for the corridor. The overall status of the corridor's office market can be enhanced by improving the aesthetic quality of the corridor and creating more opportunities for full-service restaurants and other office amenities.

Finally, some spaces are becoming functionally obsolete and may not longer represent the strongest uses for their locations. In these locations the City may want to consider encouraging redevelopment with other land uses, particularly higher density residential. The prime example of this situation is the area along Greenacre Road between the Nicholtown Neighborhood and Pleasantburg Drive. This area is characterized by low density, single-story office development and serves to disconnect the adjacent neighborhood from Pleasantburg Drive. Specific sites such as the Social Security Administration building are vacant and prime for redevelopment. The potential redevelopment of these key opportunities into higher density residential will serve to add needed population to the district, help reconnect the neighborhood to Pleasantburg Drive, and take advantage of under utilized properties.

## **For-Sale Residential**

Although a fairly strong housing stock exists just off Pleasantburg, it does not have any residential uses fronting the Drive. Housing off of the corridor ranges from very affordable and mixed-quality housing below \$50,000 to high-end neighborhoods with homes five to ten times that amount. There is, however, very little attached for-sale housing (either condominiums or townhouses) off of the corridor or in the intown area of Greenville overall. Given the national and regional demographic shifts discussed earlier, this appears to be an opportunity for the corridor.

Evidence of demand potential can be seen in new attached and detached projects emerging intown, including new condominiums, detached single-family homes, townhouses and loft conversions. These projects have been attractive to a wide range of market audiences who are growing substantially as a portion of the overall housing consumer market: young singles, childless couples, older "empty-nester" couples, and mature singles. Market-rate product generally ranges in price from \$125,000 to \$415,000 for attached product and \$160,000 to \$300,000 for single-family homes.

Very close to the corridor, on Pelham Road, a new community of quadrplexes and townhouses called Pelham Springs and Timber Trace, have sold well, with unit prices ranging from \$155,000 to \$175,000 for quadrplexes and \$120,000 to \$130,000 for townhouses. Finally, Arcadia Hills, the HOPE VI project close to the corridor, will offer new, affordable government subsidized homes starting in the \$60s up to the \$90s. With a stronger level of appearance on and adjacent to Pleasantburg, a wide array of home products and prices could be supportable in the corridor.

Infill for-sale housing, both attached and detached, represents a real and short-term opportunity in the corridor. This would both allow residential to be introduced on the corridor as well as support retail development on the corridor. Enhancing the visual appeal of Pleasantburg Drive and rethinking its role within Greenville from a transportation perspective may be needed to support residential on the corridor. Further, creating small parks or greenway trails along the river, creeks and railroad tracks that cross Pleasantburg can enhance this opportunity. Most of the product should initially be offered under \$200,000, and townhomes brought to market below \$125,000.

With key properties in Nicholtown ripe for redevelopment (Jesse Jackson Townhomes and vacant property), there is potential to offer for-sale product in conjunction with rental housing. With some parcel assemblage, the Nicholtown community can even be brought out onto Pleasantburg Drive.

## **Rental Residential**

Rental products, specifically new apartment communities, are generally uncharacteristic of the study area, especially along the Pleasantburg corridor. No new rental product has been built proximate to Pleasantburg since 1996, and before that, none had been built since 1980. The only new for-rent product in the area is found at Arcadia Hills, the new HOPE VI project being built by the Greenville Housing Authority. Adjacent to the corridor, Nicholtown's master planning is underway, and will certainly include new for-rent housing. The Pleasantburg Corridor features many qualities preferable for for-rent product, including strong regional access and close proximity to employment as well as the two universities that provide a good source for both students and faculty alike. Indeed, rental occupancies in the vicinity of Pleasantburg are relatively strong, averaging around 90%.

The opportunity for new rental product in the Pleasantburg corridor appears strong in the short-term. Area communities are performing well, and the potential built-in market audiences and positive attributes of the corridor support new development. A key challenge is to bring housing onto Pleasantburg Drive and rental apartments could represent a first effort at establishing residential on the corridor. One possibility is to integrate rental housing into a mixed-use project, perhaps at McAlister Square, pursuing Downtown and area workers as well as students and university faculty. In addition, a secondary opportunity exists to mix market rate with lower income housing in the Nicholtown area.

## 3.6 Recommended Revitalization Locations

A key factor in the revitalization of retail strips is the creation of a sense of location or place in a corridor. Indeed, Pleasantburg Drive, while having many positive attributes, has no real sense of location or place that locals or even regional residents or visitors would like to gather or visit.

Two types of opportunities exist to create these focal points:

### 1. Retail/Restaurant Center

Creation of a local-serving location featuring a group of restaurants and retail uses centered around a common amenity, such as a park or water feature. Tying into established demand generators such as the Palmetto Expo Center or McAlister Square could be a logical starting place for this.

### 2. Mixed-Use Development

Development of mixed-use project(s) where architecture and central plazas or greens frame a unique space in the market. This also serves to punch holes in the retail and office to bring residential onto the corridor.

### Revitalization Location: Palmetto Expo Center

One of the key amenities of Pleasantburg Drive is the Palmetto Expo Center, yet it is not highly visible from the street. There is potential to re-orient the Center to Pleasantburg, and in the process create parcels for uses that compliment it. There is a need and potential demand for more restaurants near the Expo Center, and the possibility exists to create a restaurant row. Clustering a group of restaurants around a special feature, such as a pond, could help the Expo Center attract a quality hotel as well as support residential development and even the office market in the general area.



*View of Expo Center*



## **Revitalization Location: McAlister Square/Laurens Road**

A unique opportunity exists at the intersection of Pleasantburg Drive and Laurens Road for redevelopment. Two sites exist proximate to this major intersection: McAlister Square, which is flanked by huge parking lots, and; the Pleasantburg Shopping Center, which is badly outdated and no longer viable as a significant retail location. With the combination of both these sites, a large amount of acreage is available for a mixed-use development.

Potential uses include neighborhood and educational serving retail stores, such as bookstores, coffee shops, and services oriented tenants. Some type of university-related office space, including perhaps a business incubator, may be appropriate in such a project. Perhaps the most important aspect of the mixed-use project would be residential. Initially, for-rent apartments above or integrated with retail uses would provide housing as well as contribute to the overall identity of the development.

The creation of dynamic projects that include a mix of housing, offices, stores, civic buildings, all in a pedestrian friendly environment, is one of the most important trends in real estate and planning today (Place Making: Developing Town Centers, Main Streets, and Urban Villages, 2002, Urban Land Institute). After evaluating commercial retail, office and for-sale and rental residential land uses and conducting interviews with residents, business owners, and real estate professionals, we believe there is a significant opportunity for a mixed-use development at McAlister Square.



*View of McAlister Square*





URBAN DESIGN PLAN

## 4.1 The Urban Design Plan Focus Areas

Based on the corridor context, stakeholder interviews, and market overview, the urban design plan has been focused around two key areas with the highest potential for redevelopment.

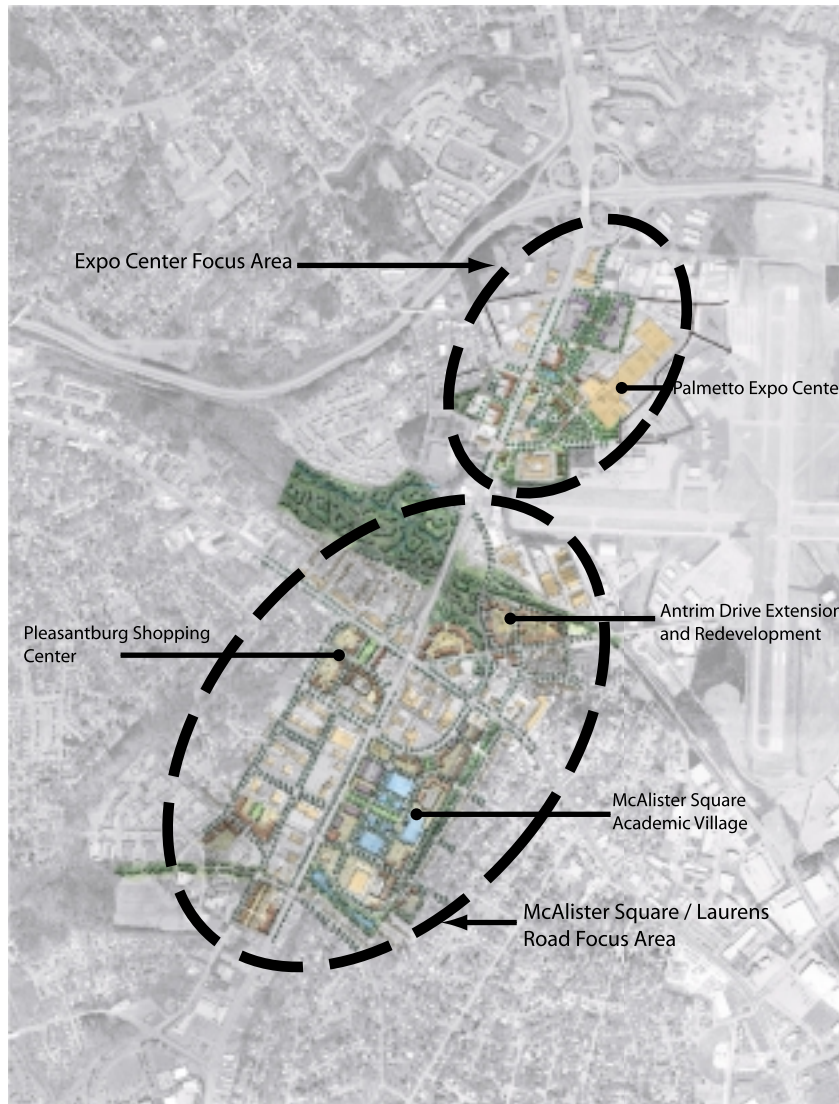
While corridor-wide efforts in streetscape, access management and design standards should be continued; this plan recommends focusing redevelopment initiatives into the areas in which they will have the most impact.

### The Palmetto Expo Center Focus Area

The goal in this area is to create better visibility for the Expo Center and to identify several key redevelopment sites that will help define a more vibrant convention and business district.

### The McAlister Square/Laurens Road Focus Area

Significant opportunities in this focus area include McAlister Square, the Pleasantburg Shopping Center, and the Antrim Drive extension. Together, these redevelopment projects reshape this area into a true mixed-use district that includes new residential, office, retail and educational facilities.



*Focus Areas*



*Existing Development Pattern*

## 4.2 Palmetto Expo Center Focus Area Opportunities

The Palmetto Expo Center represents a valuable anchor on Pleasantburg Drive. It is currently hampered by poor visibility and a lack of nearby supporting uses such as additional hotels and restaurants. The existing commercial strip development along Pleasantburg Drive and the absence of a clearly defined main entrance keeps the Expo Center from creating an identity or presence on Pleasantburg Drive.



*View of Expo Center down Tower Drive*

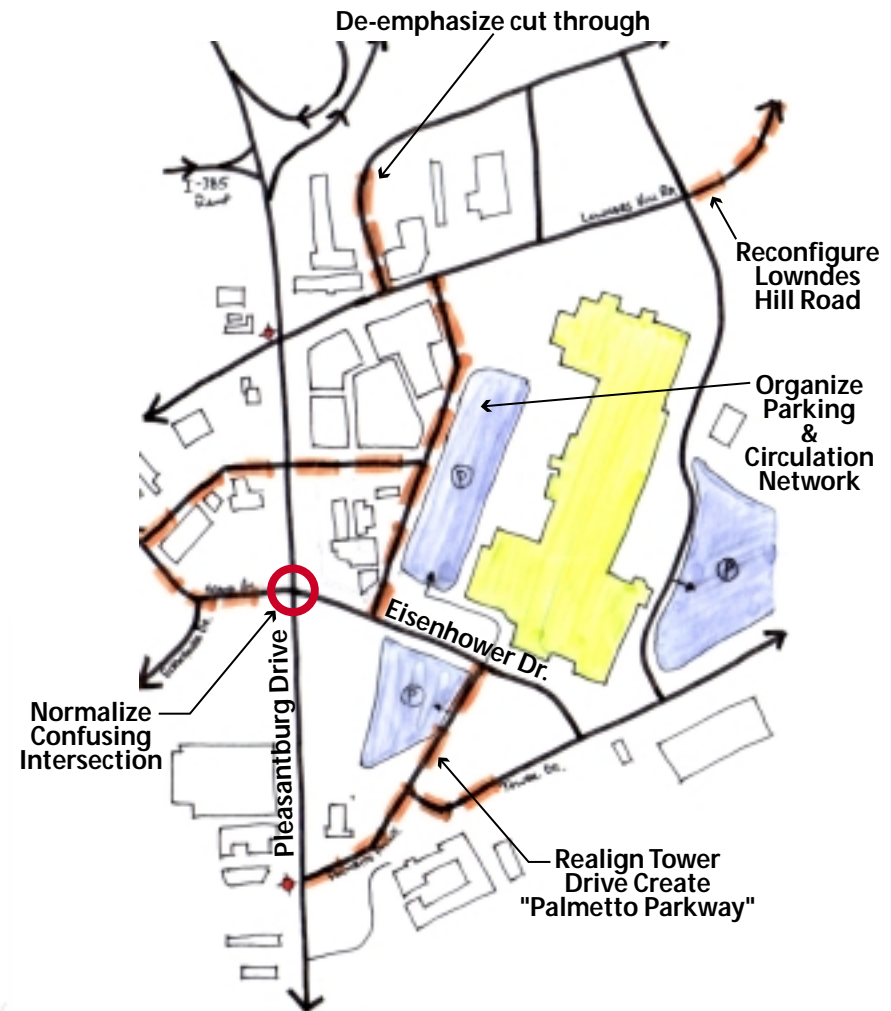


# Urban Design Plan



## Issues and Analysis

A number of functional issues exist including a lack of street network to provide multiple access points for Expo Center parking, a confusing intersection at Eisenhower Drive, and a main entrance at Tower Drive that leads to the Downtown Airport instead of the Expo Center.



## Recommendations

Recommendations include realigning Eisenhower Drive and Tower Drive, creating street network connections between Lowndes Hill Road and Eisenhower Drive, and providing better "back" access for the Expo Center to a reconfigured Lowndes Hill Road.



## 4.2.1 The Expo Center Urban Design Plan

The urban design plan for the Palmetto Expo Center is structured around a set of design moves that seek to maximize the Expo Center as a catalyst for redevelopment.

### Realign Tower Drive

The primary entrance to the Expo Center is Tower Drive. Currently, Tower Drive runs directly to the Downtown Greenville Airport and requires trips going to the Expo Center to turn on Eisenhower Drive. The proposed realignment turns Tower Drive toward the Expo Center, making the front entrance/atrium a dramatic terminus to this redesigned entry drive. The result is better visibility for the Expo Center and a direct connection from Pleasantburg Drive to its front door.

### Realign Eisenhower Drive

Eisenhower Drive is a secondary (un-signalized) access point to Expo Center. Its current alignment limits visibility and intersects with Pleasantburg Drive at an awkward angle. The proposed realignment relocates the Eisenhower Drive - Pleasantburg Drive intersection to the south, providing a more perpendicular intersection. This realignment creates better visibility for the Expo Center by reclaiming land at this intersection for signature entry features and future redevelopment.

### Redevelopment

Future hotel, retail and office development is seen as needed to support the Expo Center and to create the critical mass necessary to make this into an active convention district. The plan proposes organizing hotel and retail/restaurant development around the front of the Expo Center focused on a central public space/plaza. Additional office development is proposed to the north extending to Lowndes Hill Road organized on a new interconnected street network.

# Urban Design Plan







*Existing Conditions*

## 4.2.2 Convention District

Using the Expo Center as the anchor, a focused convention district is formed along Eisenhower Drive. With the realignment of Eisenhower Drive a new park is extended from the existing entrance plaza to Pleasantburg Drive giving the Expo Center a new presence on Pleasantburg. New hotel and restaurant development sites are organized along this new park creating a pedestrian-friendly district with a direct relationship to the Expo Center.

A triangular park formed by the alignments of Tower Drive, the new Palmetto Drive and Eisenhower Drive, forms a natural open space around an existing stream. This new park could become the centerpiece for expanded development of the Phoenix Inn or other hotel and/or office development along Tower Drive.







## **View of Expo Center entrance from Eisenhower Drive**

This view illustrates the Expo Center's lack of visibility along Pleasantburg Drive. The Expo Center is setback and hidden behind underutilized used car lots and commercial strip development on Pleasantburg Drive.



## **Proposed Realignment and Redevelopment**

The proposed realignment of Eisenhower Drive creates a new intersection with Pleasantburg Drive. This realignment allows the Expo Center's entrance plaza to be extended to Pleasantburg Drive. New hotel and retail development forms a distinct convention district along Eisenhower Drive.

# Urban Design Plan



## **Tower Drive Before**

This view from Tower Drive looking directly at the Expo Center entrance illustrates part of its visibility problem. Undeveloped Expo Center property creates a natural screen from Pleasantburg Drive.

## **Tower Drive After**

The proposed realignment of Tower Drive opens up a direct view to the Expo Center creating a dramatic entrance experience from Pleasantburg Drive. A bridge spans over the existing creek and a passive natural park is created on both sides of this new drive.

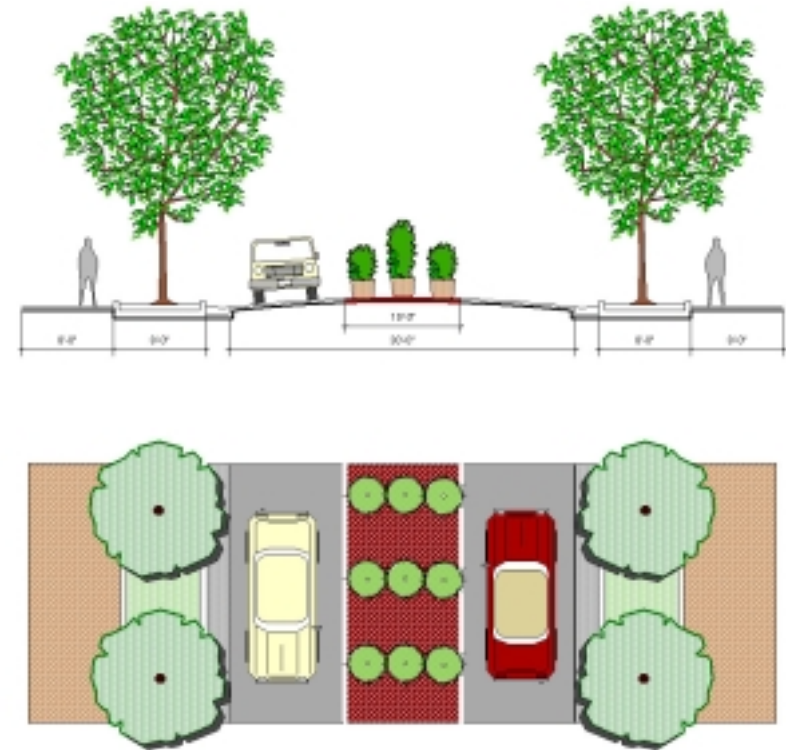
*Tower Drive Before*



*Tower Drive After*



# Urban Design Plan



## Tower Drive Cross Section

The current cross section of Tower Drive is 4-lanes with a center median/turn lane. The proposed realignment of Tower Drive includes a modified section reducing the street to 3-lanes with a center turn lane. This reduced section allows for wider sidewalks and space for street trees on either side. The center turn lane functions as a reversible lane that allows for peak time directional traffic flow at the beginning or end of major events. For events where peak volumes are not reached, a single lane in each direction serves traffic and the center lane acts as a median.

## 4.3 McAlister Square/Laurens Road Focus Area Opportunities

The McAlister Square Mall is the center of this area and represents a unique and valuable opportunity. Greenville Tech's recent revitalization of the mall as an educational facility has created a strong anchor from which to build upon. Other underutilized properties such as the Pleasantburg Shopping Center can become catalyst sites for redevelopment that will reshape this area into a vibrant mixed-use district.

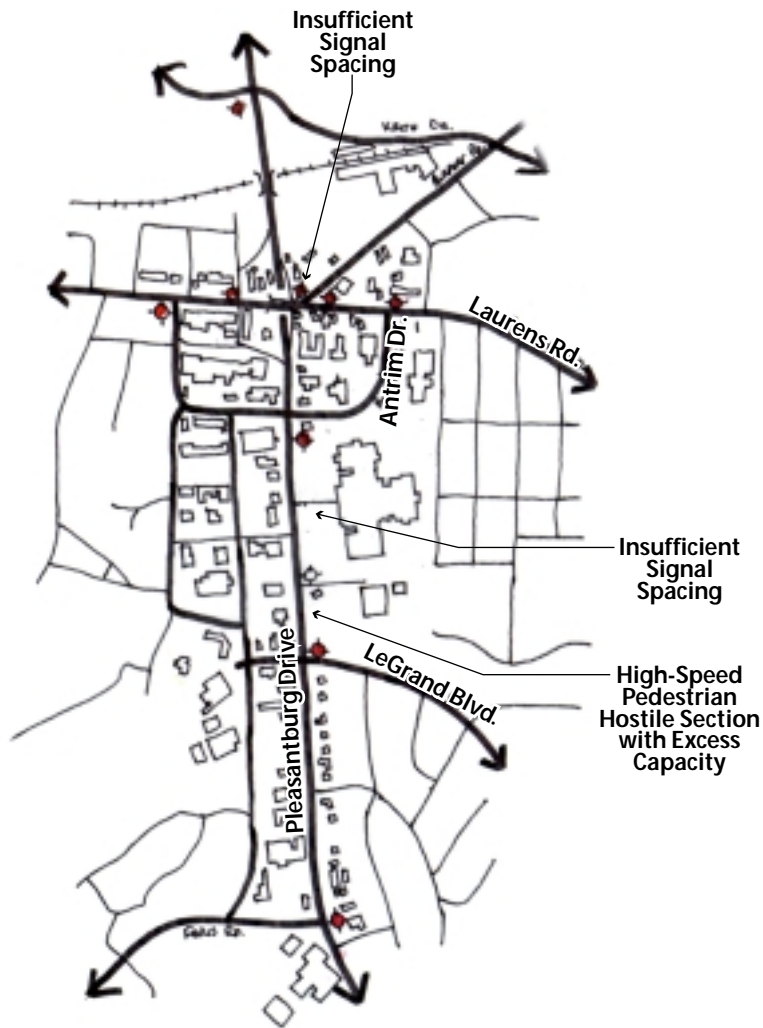


*Existing Development Pattern*



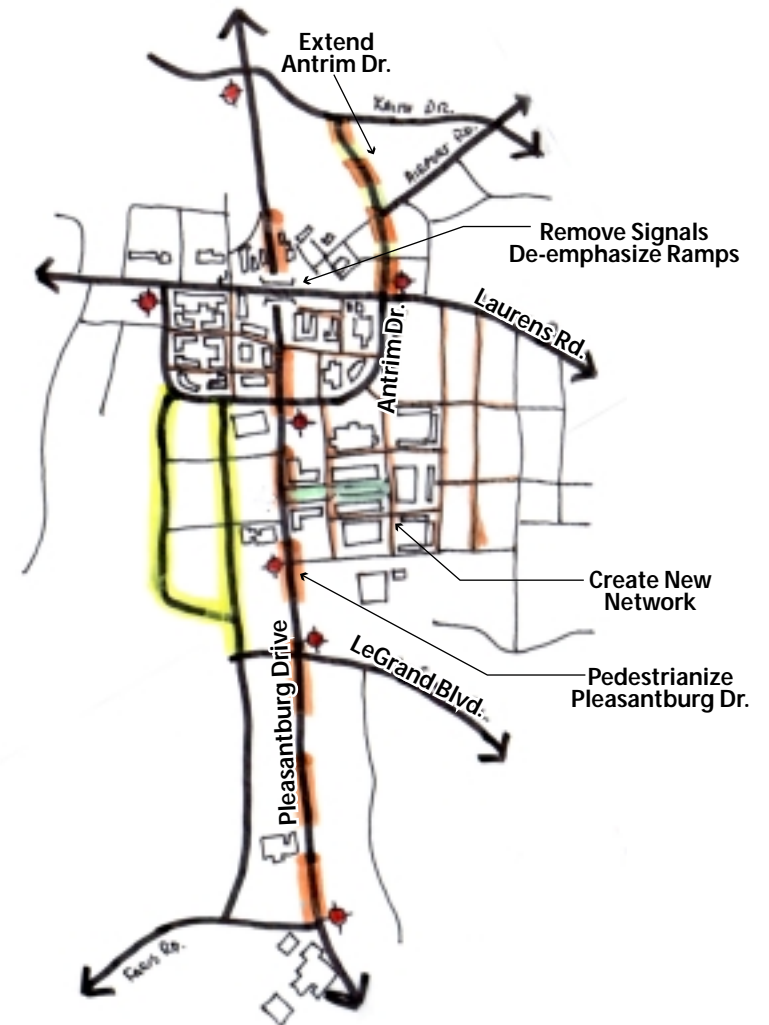
*View of McAlister Square Mall*

# Urban Design Plan



## Issues and Analysis

Functional issues include the lack of a defined street and block network in the mall and other large sites, the high speed and pedestrian-hostile nature of Pleasantburg Drive, and tight signal spacing on Laurens Road.



## Recommendations

Recommendations include extending Antrim Drive, eliminating signals on Laurens Road, building new street network and long-term redesign of Pleasantburg Drive to create a more pedestrian-friendly district.





## 4.3.1 The McAlister Square Urban Design Plan

The urban design plan for the McAlister Square area seeks to maximize the development opportunity of several large redevelopment areas including the McAlister Square Mall, Pleasantburg Shopping Center and the Antrim Drive Extension. Building on the strong base of activity created by Greenville Tech and the University Center, the long-term development of this area is envisioned as a unique mixed-use district of residential, office, retail and educational facilities.

### Antrim Drive Extension

The plan proposes the extension of Antrim Drive from Laurens Road north to Keith Drive and Pleasantburg Drive. This new connection provides a valuable alternative to Pleasantburg Drive.

### Laurens Road/Pleasantburg Intersection

Building on the removal of the Airport Road signal on Laurens Road, the plan proposes the elimination of the two other Laurens Road signals associated with the Pleasantburg Drive ramps. By routing the Laurens Road/Pleasantburg Drive intersection traffic to the Antrim Drive intersection to the south, these signals on Laurens Road are no longer necessary and their removal eliminates a problematic signal spacing issue on Laurens Road.

### Pleasantburg Shopping Center

This shopping center is ripe for redevelopment given its age, single ownership, large parcel size, and its access to both Laurens Road and Pleasantburg Drive. The redevelopment plan illustrates a primarily residential project built around a set of redefined streets and blocks.

### McAlister Square Academic Village

The McAlister Square Mall is a unique opportunity. The plan builds on its educational functions by developing supportive residential, retail and office uses in a pattern of streets, blocks, and squares.

# Urban Design Plan





## 4.3.2 Pleasantburg Shopping Center

The Pleasantburg Shopping Center is a single-owner, underutilized property that has neared the end of its development life-cycle. The urban design plan proposes a mix-use residential project centered on a new public green. To facilitate the larger network connections, this site has been broken up into regular urban sized blocks with a "build-to" street edge condition. The urban square between Laurens Road and Liberty Lane provides needed urban public space and creates a unique identity for this mixed-use project.



Existing Conditions

### Key development components

- Two-three story residential development with ground-level retail.
- Structured parking decks to support multi-story residential density.
- Central public square or green.
- Extension of Frederick Street from Antrim Drive to Laurens Road to develop a parallel street connection west of Pleasantburg Drive and expand an organized network of streets.
- Minor realignment of the Laurens Road - Antrim Drive - Jervey Avenue intersection to eliminate off-set.



# Urban Design Plan



*Shopping Center Before*

## **Pleasantburg Shopping Center Before**

Pleasantburg Shopping Center is an aging and underutilized commercial property that is ripe for redevelopment.

## **Pleasantburg Shopping Center After**

The proposed redevelopment creates an urban residential neighborhood with multifamily residential organized on streets and blocks. Ground-floor retail uses provide needed services and establish a new neighborhood center.



*Shopping Center After*



## 4.3.3 Antrim Drive Extension

The plan proposes the extension of Antrim Drive from Laurens Road, north to Keith Drive and Pleasantburg Drive. This new connection does several key things: 1) it provides a new parallel route to Pleasantburg, 2) it opens up for redevelopment underutilized property at the Laurens Road/Pleasantburg Drive intersection, 3) it eliminates the need for the Airport Road signal at Laurens Road helping the operation of Laurens Road.



*Existing Conditions*

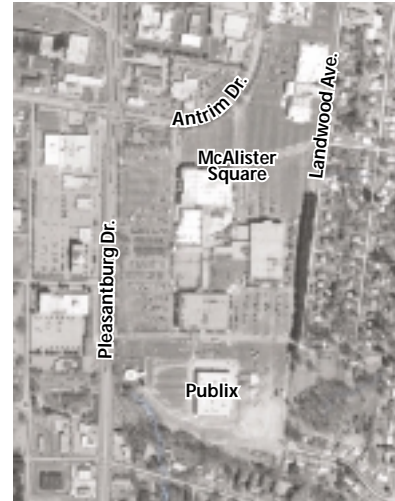
### Key Development Components

- Provides increased accessibility to underutilized Highway Department parcels facilitating their redevelopment.
- Extension of a public trails and greenway system along the CSX railroad connecting the new Arcadia Hills neighborhood to the Antrim Drive extension and McAlister Square.
- Development of multi-story residential uses with mix of apartments and townhomes along the new greenway and Antrim Drive.



## 4.3.4 McAlister Square Academic Village

McAlister Square is the heart of this area. Greenville Tech's reuse of this property has brought needed activity and is an important catalyst. Building on these academic uses, the plan illustrates the potential of further redevelopment and intensification by adding new residential, office and retail uses. This redevelopment is organized on new streets, blocks and public spaces. Over time structured parking decks will replace surface parking lots to facilitate the site's intensification.



Existing Conditions

### Key Components of the plan

- Development of an academic core centered on a new central open space or quad by adaptive reuse of the existing mall anchor buildings and additional new development.
- New residential, including student housing, throughout the site creating a true mixed-use "academic village".
- A mix of structured and surface parking, shared to facilitate higher density development.
- Expansion of a street and block network that creates a finer grain of development and reconnects the site to the surrounding neighborhood.

### Phasing:

This plan for McAlister Square is a long-term vision that will require many steps and phases. In particular, the "de-malling" of the core mall is envisioned to occur in at least two phases. Phase 1 includes building new retail and office development on the new entrance drive square. This new development provides additional revenue generation and space to potentially relocate existing tenants out of the mall. Then a potential phase 2 could include demolishing the core mall in order to make way for an expanded central green space and new retail, office, or academic uses around it.





# Urban Design Plan



*Mall Before*

## **McAlister Square Before**

McAlister Square's main entrance from Pleasantburg Drive presents the image of a typical suburban commercial property with large expanses of parking and buildings set far back from the street.

## **McAlister Square After**

The planned improvements to this entry include incorporating the mature stand of trees into a formal square. Proposed multi-story, mixed-use buildings on either side of this new park will create a pedestrian-friendly urban environment that brings a distinctive academic statement to Pleasantburg Drive.



*Mall After*

## 4.3.5 Street Network

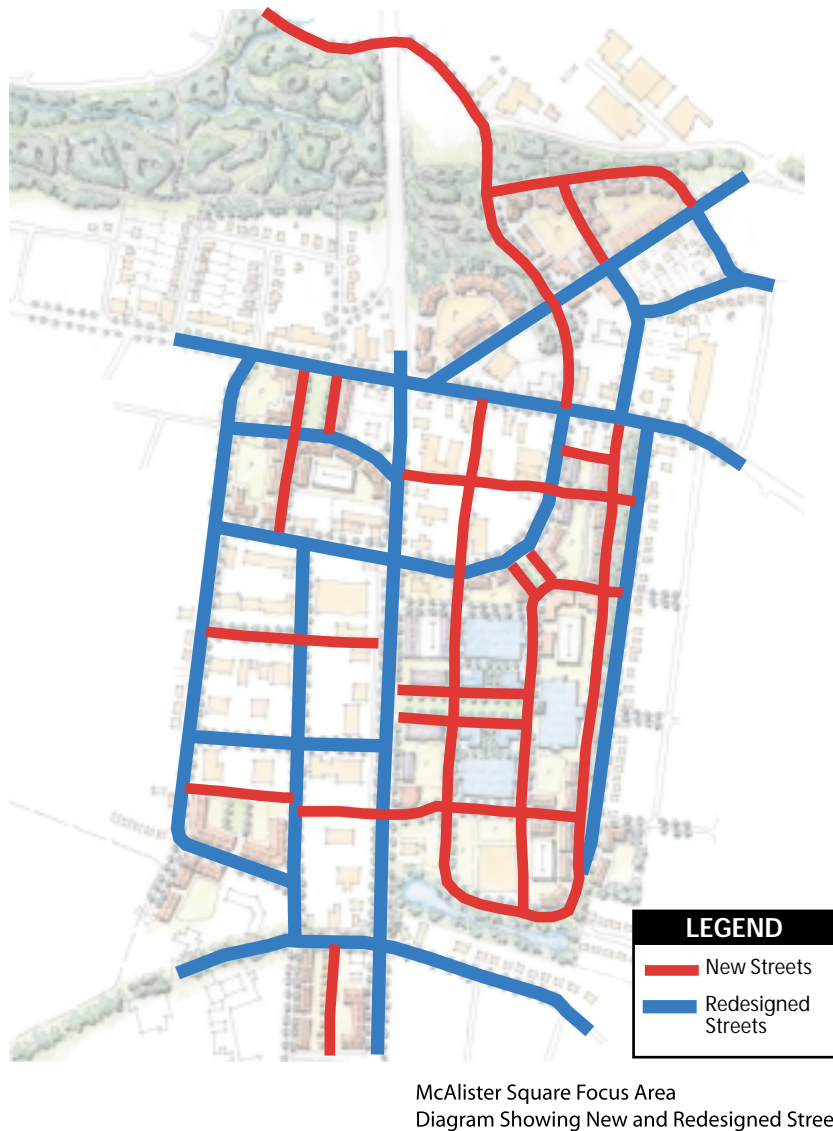
One of the critical issues in the McAlister Square/Laurens Road Focus Area is the lack of a defined grid network of streets and blocks. A fully developed network of streets and blocks will allow traffic to distribute more evenly throughout the area without depending on or burdening a few streets. The urban design plan proposes both new streets and redesigned streets.

### New Streets

The new streets are planned as part of redevelopment. These should be planned as local 2-lane streets with sidewalks, street trees, and in some cases, on-street parking. These new streets should be built by the developer as part of redevelopment efforts. Although in some cases the City may want to pay for and build these new streets as an incentive for redevelopment.

### Redesigned Streets

There are a number of existing public streets that should be improved to include basic pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks and street trees. Some of these streets such as Frederick Street and Greenacre Road, are interrupted by continuous access to adjacent parking lots making them seem more like private drives than public streets.



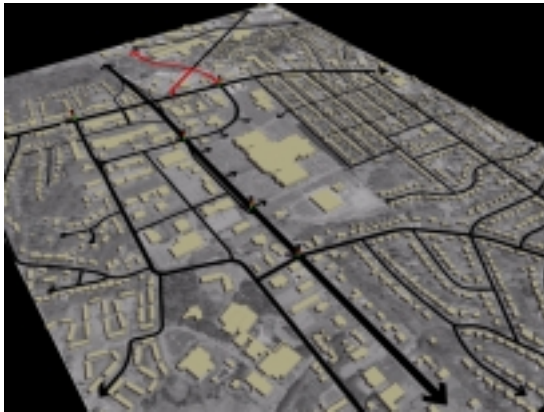
*Proposed Street Network Plan*



*Typical 2-Lane Street with and without On-Street Parking*

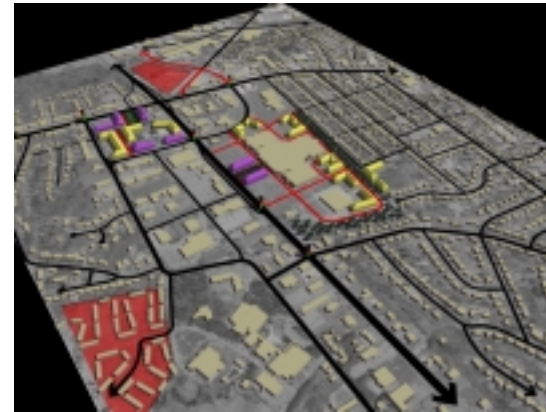


## 4.3.6 Phasing



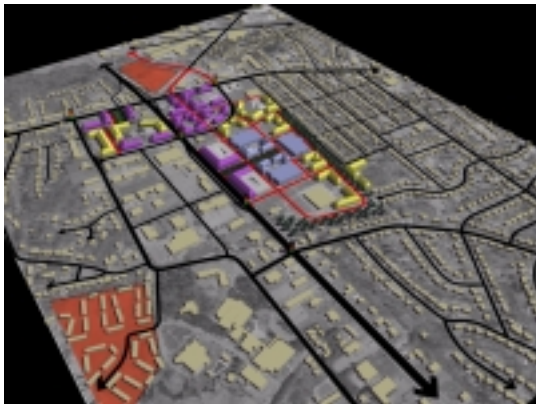
### Phasing: 1-2 Years

- Antrim Drive Extension
- Laurens Road Signalization Improvements



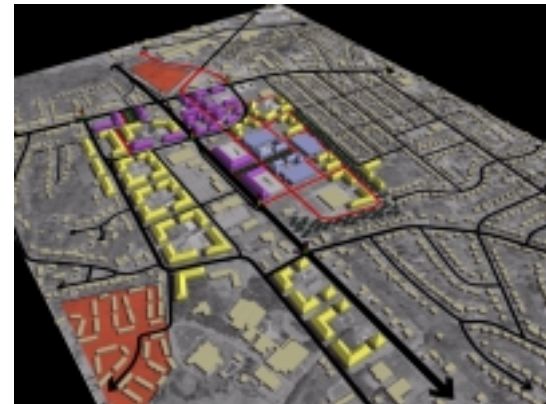
### Phasing: 2-5 Years

- Pleasantburg Shopping Center redevelopment
- New residential at McAlister Square
- New office and retail on McAlister Square, extending an academic presence to Pleasantburg Drive



### Phasing: 5-10 Years

- De-Malling of McAlister Square with new retail and educational facilities, structured parking, streets, and squares
- New Residential development along Antrim Drive building off of the McAlister Square Academic Village



### Phasing: 10 Years and Beyond

- New residential redevelopment along Greenacre Road and McAlister Road between the Nicholtown Neighborhood and Pleasantburg Drive

#### 4.4 Pleasantburg Drive

### Existing Condition

Pleasantburg Drive is currently a 7-lane cross section: 3-travel lanes in each direction with a center turn lane. The overhead utility lines, absence of consistent street trees, narrow sidewalks, numerous driveways, and speed of traffic, together create an unattractive and pedestrian-hostile environment.

Streetscape and driveway consolidation improvements are currently being implemented by the City along the corridor on a parcel-by-parcel basis. In addition, the City is also landscaping many of the center medians throughout the corridor.

## Proposed Improvements

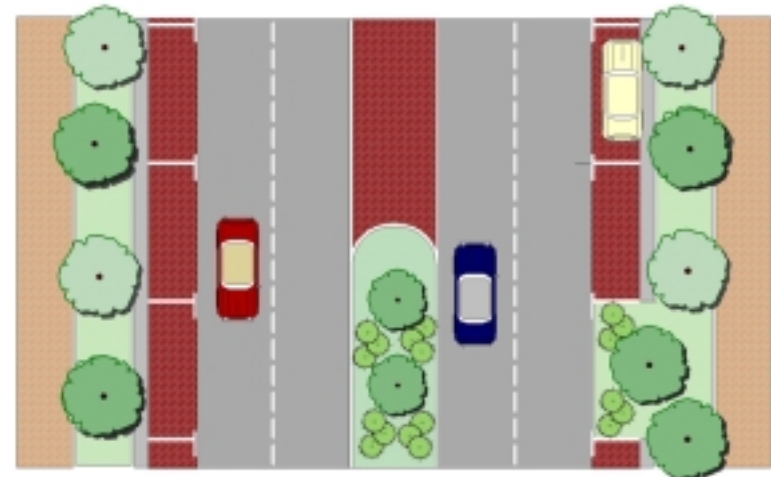
To build on these on-going improvements, the urban design plan recommends an even more dramatic approach to Pleasantburg Drive in the McAlister Square area from Laurens Road to LeGrand Boulevard. It is in this section that the opportunity for pedestrian-oriented redevelopment is the greatest, centered on the McAlister Square Academic Village.

The proposed improvements to Pleasantburg Drive include converting the outside travel lane on each side into a larger sidewalk and/or planting strip, thereby reducing the travel lanes from six to four. Over time, and as needed, this planting strip could be converted to on-street parking to support adjacent redevelopment.

This redesign of Pleasantburg Drive will create a more development friendly street, calm traffic speeds, encourage pedestrian activity and produce a more attractive streetscape.

These proposed improvements are based on several factors:

- The traffic volume in this section of Pleasantburg Drive (23,000 ADT-2002) indicates that 4-lanes could accommodate existing traffic. (from Laurens Road to LeGrand Boulevard)
- Right-of-way conditions under the Laurens Road Bridge force traffic into 4-lanes, providing a logical starting point to begin the narrowing.
- The potential is high for redevelopment at McAlister Square which could create a pedestrian-friendly, academic district. Pleasantburg Drive should be designed to support and encourage this redevelopment.



*Proposed Section with On-Street Parking*

# Urban Design Plan



## **Pleasantburg Drive: Existing Conditions**

This view of Pleasantburg Drive at McAlister Square illustrates a number of its negative features; overhead utility lines, narrow sidewalk, adjacent under-developed parking lots, and the wide expanse of 6-lanes of vehicle travel.



## **Pleasantburg Drive: Narrowed**

The basic narrowing of Pleasantburg Drive by converting the outside travel lane into a planting strip is the first step to reshaping the image of the corridor.



# Urban Design Plan



**Pleasantburg Drive: Supporting Redevelopment**  
With the development of pedestrian-oriented, street fronting uses the character of the street changes dramatically. The burying of utility lines and the addition of median landscape and sidewalk streetscape design help reshape Pleasantburg Drive into a pedestrian oriented corridor.



**Pleasantburg Drive: On-Street Parking**  
The option of converting the planting strip to on-street parking in key areas will provide convenient parking for adjacent businesses and provides an additional buffer between the sidewalk and moving traffic.



IMPLEMENTATION

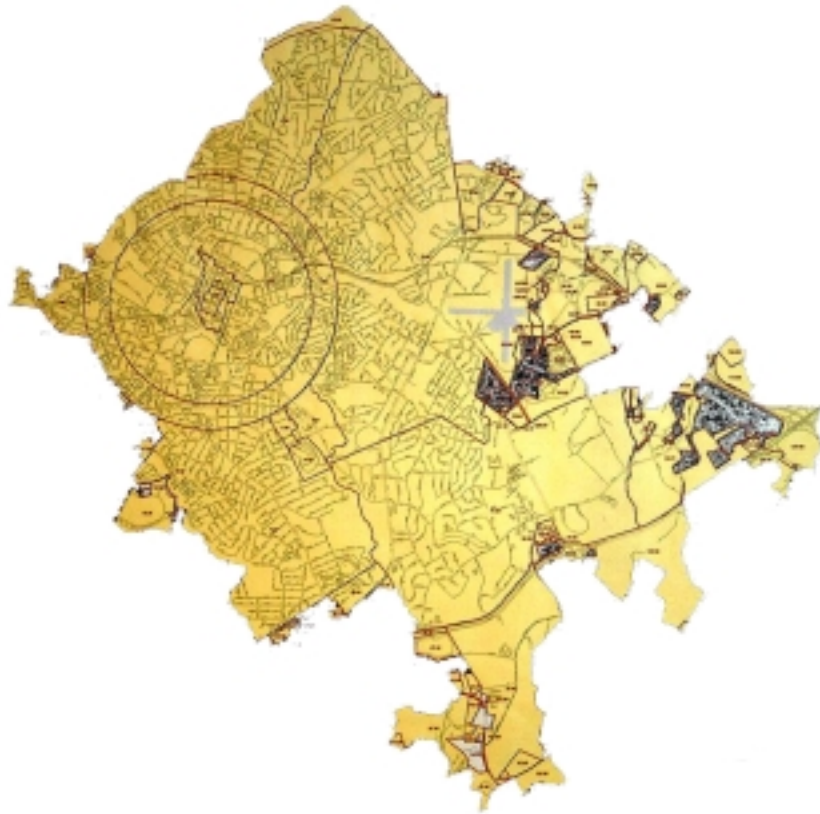


## Implementation

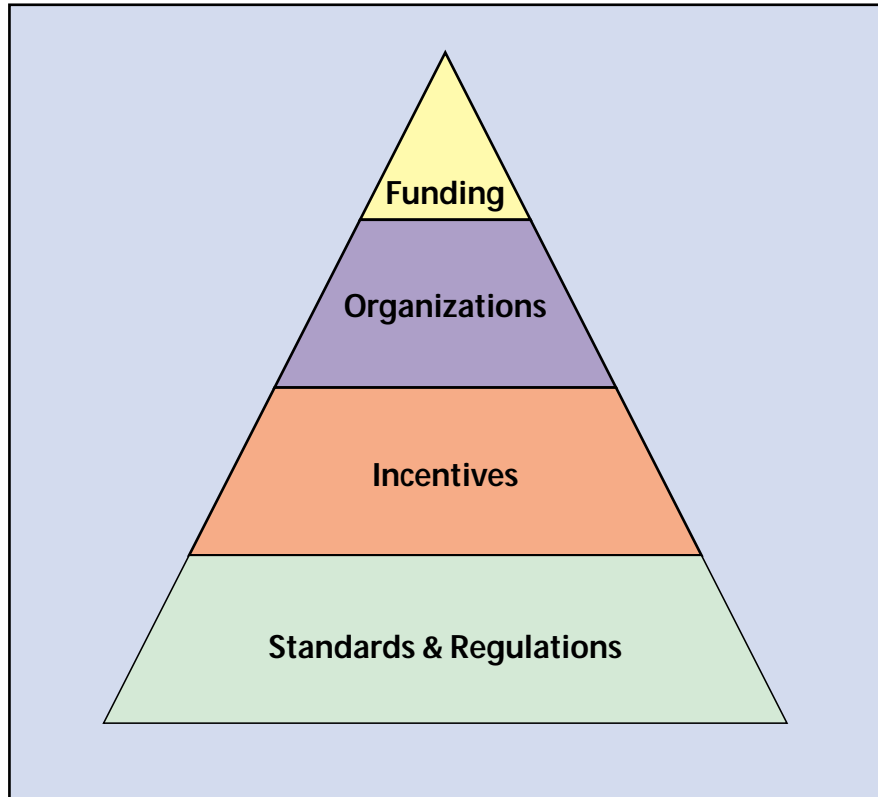
From the city's founding until the end of World War II, Downtown Greenville was the center of Greenville's commercial vitality. In the period between 1950 and 1980, much of that energy shifted to Pleasantburg Drive. Now, as it did for Downtown after the 1940s, major growth and investment have shifted away from Pleasantburg Drive to other "greenfield" areas. Yet, as with Downtown, Pleasantburg Drive and the districts along it represent a valuable economic and civic resource that the City must now reinvest in.

Downtown Greenville is an excellent example of this community's ability to recognize and cultivate valuable civic resources. Built primarily between 1880 and 1930, Downtown Greenville is a fine collection of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century commercial architecture organized within a coherent and interconnected network of streets and alleys. In the early 1970s, the Greenville recognized the value of the resource and investment that Downtown Greenville represented and instituted a sustained program of reinvestment. Today, after nearly a generation of effort, that reinvestment is paying solid returns for the Greenville community.

As Greenville has grown, so have its opportunities and its challenges. Since its charter as a "village" by the South Carolina legislature in 1831, the City of Greenville has seen a succession of annexations that have brought it from its original area of only eight blocks to a city of just over 28 square miles. Those annexations brought with them the opportunities to expand services, build an economic and civic resource base and increase the City's revenue base. They have also brought the responsibility to provide quality services, enhance the citizenry's quality of life through reinvestment. This approach proved successful for Downtown; the time has come to take that same approach for Pleasantburg Drive.



*Greenville Annexation History*



## 5.1 A Hierarchy of Action

This plan envisions implementing its recommendations through a hierarchy of actions which underpin focused public investments with an armature of directed regulatory initiatives, proactive public-private partnerships and targeted incentive programs. This hierarchy is also roughly geographical: funding, the tip of the pyramid, is focused on a few small areas; standards and regulations may apply to the entire Study Area.

The necessity for such an approach is clear: while overall action is necessary for the long term health of the entire community, the complete length of Pleasantburg Drive is far too large and diverse an area to address as a single project. Looking at Downtown Greenville for some comparative examples, we see that the land area of the Downtown Revitalization district is just under two hundred acres. A potential Pleasantburg Improvement District from I-385 to Faris Road, in contrast, would be over five hundred acres. The entire Pleasantburg Drive Corridor is significantly larger, still.

Obviously, it is not practical to attempt wholesale active revitalization. Even if the financial resources were available, the local market would not be able to absorb changes of such a scale. Pleasantburg, like Downtown before it, must be addressed through a range of policy, regulatory and programmatic initiatives that will stretch over a number of years and depend upon the active engagement of both the public and private sectors.

## 5.2 Standards & Regulations

The foundation of the revitalization pyramid is publicly-promulgated standards and regulations. It is these which have given the area much of its current character and it is to them that we must look to begin to alter its trajectory. To support the changes this plan recommends and to establish its long term health, the entire corridor must begin to support and encourage redevelopment having the same physical form as the plan recommends for the focus areas.

It is important to assure that design standards required by the City's zoning ordinance, development standards and other guidelines are not in conflict with the concepts of this plan, which seeks to accommodate incremental growth and change and assure the long term economic health of the districts along Pleasantburg Drive by fostering a pedestrian-friendly, human scale multimodal environment. The City can pursue this process by enhancing the Corridor Overlay standards and certain provisions of the overall zoning ordinance.

Many of the standards which exist in the current ordinances, some of which are also proposed to carry forward into the proposed zoning ordinance update now in process, are counter to this plan's concepts. These conflicts come primarily from retaining standards which are auto-oriented and/or pedestrian-hostile. In some cases, they are the result of allowing, but not requiring, development patterns that reinforce the plan's goals.

## Street Design Standards

### Issues

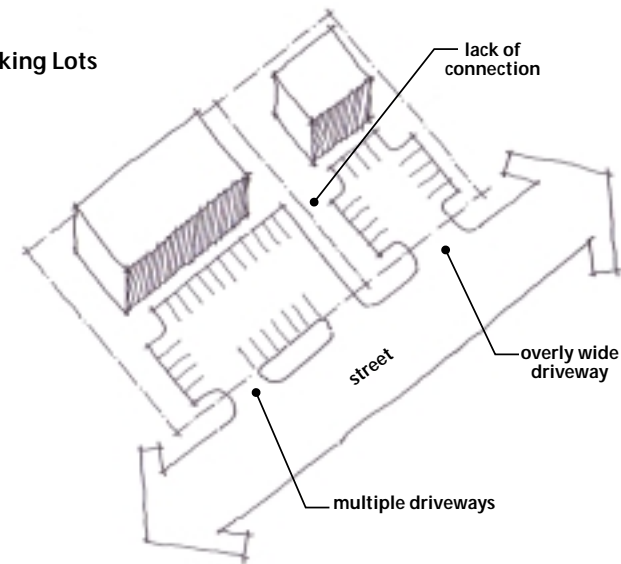
The City's Street design standards continue to require minimum lane widths, overall pavement widths, corner radii and minimum block lengths in excess of those necessary to allow safe vehicular circulation in a pedestrian district.

### Recommendations

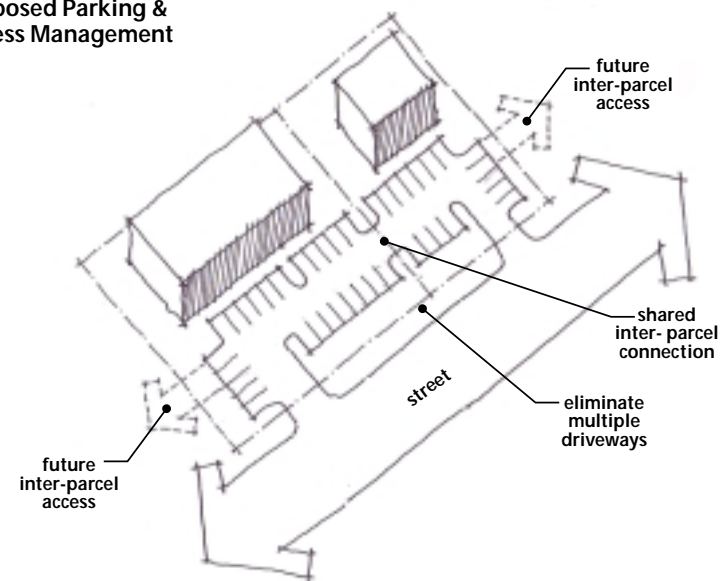
This plan relies in part on a better-developed network of several types of streets to create the people-oriented environment that will support revitalization. The beginnings of this street system are outlined in this plan. As part of the Corridor Overlay standards the city should develop and adopt a system of street classifications design standards that support a pedestrian-friendly environment while adequately facilitating vehicular movement in the district.

- Guidelines for new streets and blocks should be established to support the development of a denser network of streets. For a desirable pedestrian environment that allows for adequate vehicular traffic movement, a block perimeter of 2,400 feet would be a functional maximum. This guideline can yield, for instance, a 600' x 600' block or an 800' x 400' block.
- Inter-parcel vehicular access between abutting properties should be provided with new development so that access to individual properties can be shared, minimizing curb cuts and managing access.

Typical Parking Lots



Proposed Parking & Access Management



## Site Development Standards:

### Issues

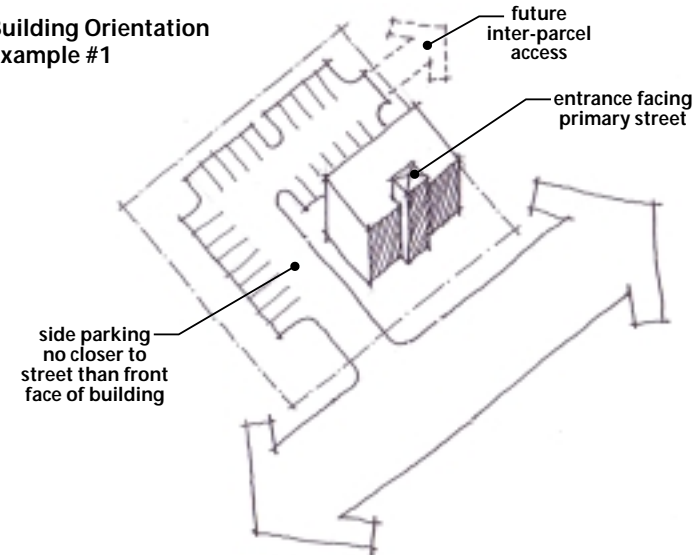
Setback standards in some cases allow buildings to move closer to the street, but do not require them to do so, except to the extent they do not permit parking in front of a building. Without a specific limit on setbacks, the development process will tend to continue with "business as usual," setting freestanding structures eighty to three hundred feet from the street in the center of a superblock and thereby destroying any potential for an active pedestrian environment.

### Recommendations

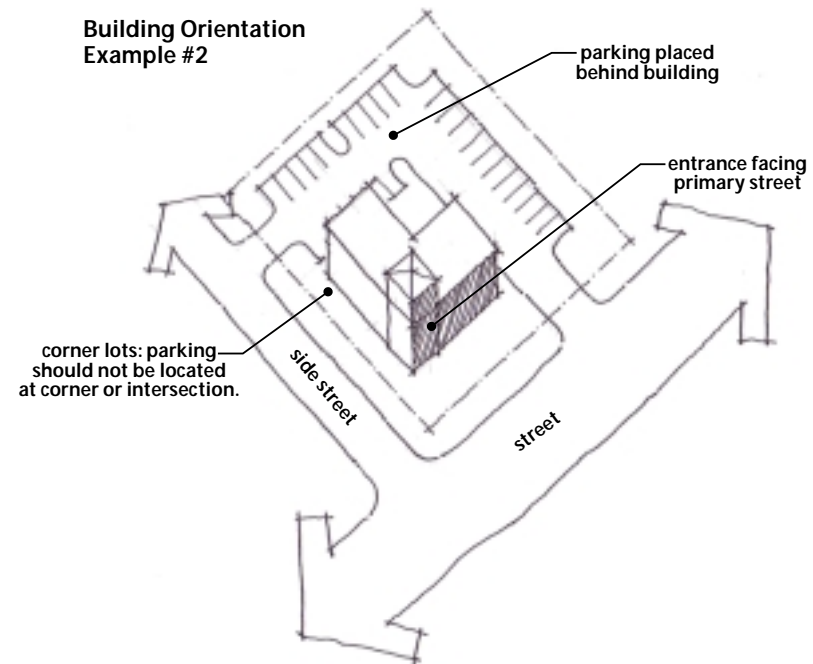
As part of the Corridor Overlay standards, the City should develop and adopt more prescriptive site development standards that include minimums and maximum setbacks, and require minimum building frontages along key pedestrian-oriented streets.

- Buildings should be placed and oriented toward the primary street frontage with parking placed along the side or to the rear of the building.
- All buildings should have a pedestrian entrance on the primary street frontage.
- Establish a minimum front yard setback (example: 10 to 15 feet) to allow for wider sidewalks, site landscaping, and outdoor dining, etc.
- Establish a maximum front yard setback or "build-to" line (example: 20 to 25 feet) to allow for expanded building entrance areas or plazas but not large enough to accommodate parking between the street and building.
- Where parking areas front along the street a continuous opaque screen should be provided such as a wall or hedge ranging in height from a minimum of 2 feet to a maximum of 3 feet.

**Building Orientation  
Example #1**



**Building Orientation  
Example #2**





## Pedestrian Standards

### Issues

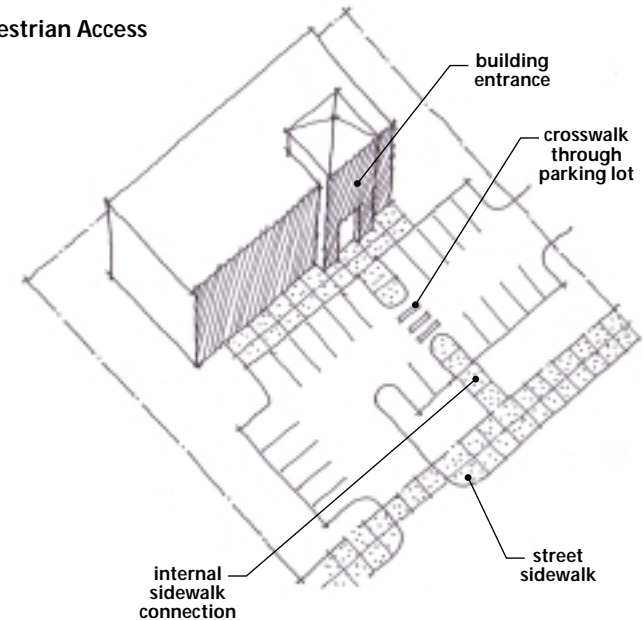
Street design and site development standards contribute to an improved pedestrian environment by adjusting those elements of the urban fabric to support pedestrian activity, but without a safe, comfortable and attractive pedestrian realm, these changes are not sufficient. Both in the current and the proposed ordinance, there are essentially no pedestrian design standards.

### Recommendations

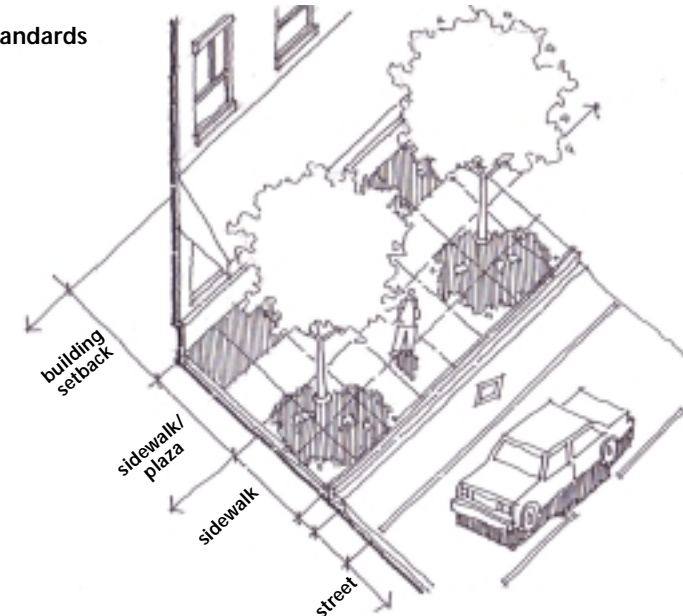
In order to assure that a pedestrian-friendly environment evolves, clear and pragmatic pedestrian design standards should be adopted as part of the City's design standards.

- Sidewalks should be provided with a minimum width of 6 feet for pedestrian movement, with the "minimum front yard setback" of 10 to 15 feet utilized as a potential street furniture/commercial use zone.
- Street trees provide scale to the street, shade, and separation from traffic for the pedestrian. They should generally be planted every 30 to 40 feet on center and placed as close to the street as DOT standards will allow, ideally 4 to 6 feet from back of curb.
- Pedestrian street lighting is a typically overlooked element of a successful pedestrian friendly district, nighttime activities are a critical part of achieving an active district especially around McAlister Square and the Expo Center. Pedestrian-scaled lighting should be provided along sidewalks with fixtures limited in height to 10 to 15 feet
- All developed sites should provide at least one continuous intra-parcel walkway of at least five feet in width to connect sidewalks adjoining rights-of-way to the main entrance of the building.

### Internal Pedestrian Access



### Pedestrian Standards



## Parking Standards

### *Issues*

Among the major determinates of urban form today are parking standards. There is an increasing awareness that generalized national parking standards, which have been adopted by many localities and internalized by the development and commercial lending communities, may not be appropriate for mixed use, pedestrian-oriented urban or suburban environments. There are those who now contend that the urge to provide large quantities of parking has become so ingrained that no requirements are any longer necessary. Indeed, maximum allowable, rather than minimum required, parking standards are seeing greater use.

Generally, the current Greenville code sets standards that are similar to many other communities and less wasteful of land than some. The proposed code appears to carry these standards forward. It does introduce the concept of maximum parking allowances but the maxima are so egregious that it is unlikely that any projects would even begin to approach them. Still, the standards appear to result in a development pattern that uses at least sixty percent of its land area for parking and circulation and no more than forty percent for productive enterprise.

Of course, the development pattern could be altered by employing structured parking rather than surface parking. To take this approach, however, begs the question of affordability and of market viability. Structured parking costs approximately three times as much as surface parking.

### *Recommendations*

To be effective, ordinances must be practical in the marketplace. If this is deemed an appropriate direction, then it will likely be necessary to modify density regulations to allow sufficient intensity of use to support the cost of structured parking. It will also be necessary to provide economic incentives for that intensity of development, as has been done Downtown. This may prove more problematical, though, because the population density is far below that which would be required to support most development that would employ structure parking.

In order to support implementation of this plan, the City should carefully consider the parking requirements in the Corridor Overlay district and move toward development of standards that provide sufficient parking for a mixed use pedestrian environment through use of shared parking calculations, allowances for on-street parking, reduced block size, maximum parking allowances, maximum site area coverage by parking, or similar techniques.

## 5.3 Incentives

Public incentives to private investment are among the most problematical aspect of a revitalization plan. To succeed, they require a thorough understanding of the motivations and economics of investment in the planning area.

### On-Going Programs

The City of Greenville, working with the Pleasantburg Drive Business Association, has already developed and pursued some incentives, including streetscape improvements and driveway consolidation, and a matching grant program for façade enhancements.

### Standards & Regulations

Changes to the City's standards and regulations can provide an incentive to redevelopment. Setback changes alone can create an incentive. Reducing the setback on a hundred foot wide parcel from forty feet to twelve feet will increase the usable site area by 2,800 square feet. On smaller parcels in older districts, this alone may make the difference in whether a redevelopment project occurs. In addition, the City can provide density/intensity bonuses for appropriately designed projects that meet the plan's goals and objectives.

### Capital Improvement Projects

With a capital improvement program designed to advance the revitalization plan in place, state and federal funding programs may be used as incentives. For example, property owners or the improvement district may use their funds as local match for federal improvement grants, with the city facilitating the process and serving as the sponsor required by many federal programs.

### Property Assembly & Acquisition

One of the most difficult hurdles to overcome in the redevelopment process is property assemblage and acquisition. The City and/or a Business Improvement District can proactively get involved in specific redevelopment projects by using funds to assemble and acquire key redevelopment sites and then solicit appropriate developers.

## 5.4 Organization

The next tier in the revitalization pyramid is Organization. This element is critical at several levels. First, it is necessary to have some broad-based organization that can work to engage private sector stakeholders like business operators and property owners. The Pleasantburg Drive Business Association is already working actively to accomplish this.

Because of the long-term nature of the revitalization effort, because of the need for strategic coordination of projects over time and because of the need for a consistent revenue stream dedicated to the effort, there must also be an organization whose sole mission is to implement the plan's projects, programs and initiatives.

Over the last two decades, two forms of special districts have come into use and are providing a mechanism for not only generating additional revenues to address localized issues, typically ones related to urban decline, but also to create a climate for proactive initiatives that combat the district's negative conditions. These two types of districts, both of which are allowed under South Carolina law, are Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts and Community (or Business) Improvement Districts (CID/BID).

### 5.4.1 Tax Increment Financing Districts

Tax Increment Financing Districts (TIF) are ones which rely upon a growth in a defined district's tax digest to create a funding pool which can be used to repay bonds sold to build public improvements that rectify the conditions that are discouraging private reinvestment in the district. The expectation is that, once these conditions are eliminated, private investment will return to the area to build its tax digest, which in turn, will provide the funds to retire the bonds.

For the Study Area, a TIF district does not appear to be a viable approach. The state enabling legislation restricts the total land area of any municipality's TIFs to five percent of its area. The City of Greenville already has several TIF districts and does not have enough qualifying land area remaining to create a district on Pleasantburg Drive.

South Carolina law also requires, rather than permits, bonds to be sold or the district must be dissolved. In some other states, the district may exist without selling bonds, instead using its incremental revenues as local match for federal funds. These requirements make the mechanism a more project-oriented one rather than a community-oriented one, as is more appropriate for an area like Pleasantburg Drive, where non-income producing public amenities are the primary need in attracting private investment that will build the tax base.



## 5.4.2 Municipal Improvement District

A Municipal Improvement District (MID) holds a greater opportunity. Enabled by the Municipal Improvement Law of 1999 and known in South Carolina as Municipal Improvement Districts, allow jurisdictions to create taxing districts empowered to levy additional property taxes on its owners and to use the funds for a range of public improvements of the sort envisioned by this plan. The state's first major one, the City Center Partnership in Columbia, "provides public space management, economic development, marketing services, and public advocacy for downtown Columbia," according to its website ([www.citycentercolumbia.sc](http://www.citycentercolumbia.sc)).

### Purpose and Role

By providing focus, creating a multi-year strategy for putting the needed improvements in place and engaging the area's stakeholders, the MID can provide the momentum to move a plan forward into actual projects on the ground. Many MIDs which are focused on transportation issues, for example, use their funds and energy to develop designs for projects with consensus in order to move them ahead in the federal funding process faster than if they were following local government's schedule.

The MID would be a private entity created in conjunction with local government as part of a public-private partnership. The public side of this partnership must be organized in a way that complements the private side. Downtown Greenville's success demonstrates that this capability exists in Greenville. The question is how to transfer the knowledge and experience gained in cultivating Downtown's resources to Pleasantburg Drive.

### Source of Funding

The Municipal Improvement Act provides a variety of bases for establishing assessments, such as millage rate, front foot charges, parcel area and others. Assessment level may also vary in parts of the district. In the Columbia case, for example, portions of the district are subject to a dual assessment. The entire district is subject to the millage rate and properties on certain streets, who sought a higher level of service, are also subject to a front-foot assessment for those extra services. Of course, as development occurs, the MID's funding base will increase.

# Implementation



Potential Improvement District

## Current Estimated Revenues

	Private	Public	Total
Total Values *	\$ 128,299,655.00	\$ 19,552,315.00	
Assessment Rate	6%	6%	
Total Millage Rate	0.2985	0	
Total Tax Revenues	\$ 2,297,846.82	0	\$ 2,297,846.82

## MID Revenue Projections

	Private	Public	Total
Total Values *	\$ 128,299,655.00	\$ 19,552,315.00	
Assessment Rate	6%	6%	
Proposed Millage Rate**	0.02985	0.02985	
Total MID Revenues	\$ 229,784.68	35018.00	\$ 264,802.68

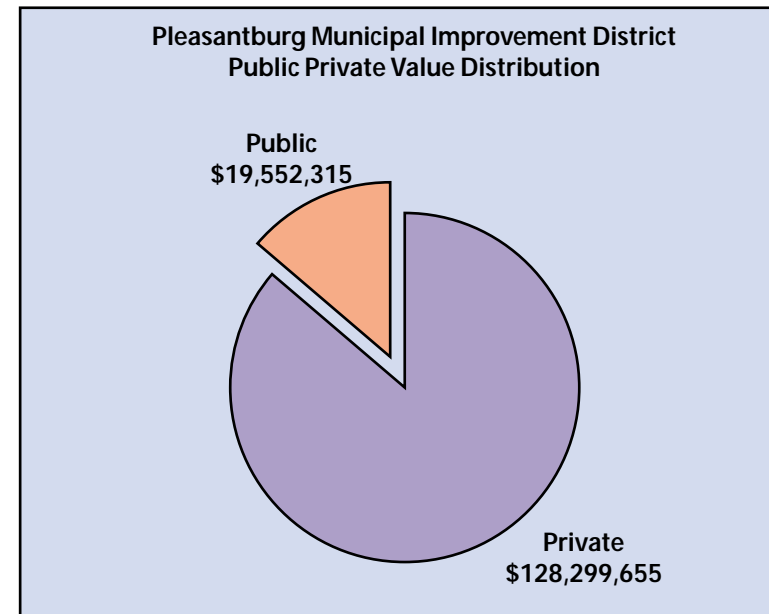
\* Based on City of Greenville GIS property data

\*\* Proposed MID Millage Rate based on 10% of current Millage Rate

## Case Study: A Pleasantburg Drive Improvement District

A MID along Pleasantburg Drive from I-385 to Cleveland Street would contain about 300 parcels and 550 acres, including public properties. These holdings now generate nearly \$2.3 million per year in property taxes. An additional thirty mills of a self-imposed MID tax would yield \$230,000 per year in revenues for district purposes (this rate is based on that of the State's first MID, City Center Partnership in Columbia).

Assuming contributions of \$250,000 in lieu of taxes from public and institutional properties in the district, the revenues should be about a quarter million dollars per year. With 60% of this amount used as local match to leverage federal funds, a district could bring in an additional \$600,000 a year. In the Columbia case, all public sector entities are contributing to the MID in lieu of taxes, in the recognition that they are receiving services from the MID.



## **MID Board**

While the Municipal Improvement Act does not require the establishment of a managing board, in order to stimulate involvement and minimize opposition to a district, part of establishing the district should be formation of a MID board composed of property owners in the district.

This MID board would be organized as a non-profit corporation with a 501(c)3 tax- exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code. This would allow it to accept tax-deductible contributions from individuals and businesses that can be used (within the limitations of federal tax law) for the district's projects and programs, either outright or as matching funds. The potential for such donations is important; Sandy Springs Revitalization, Inc. (SSRI), a similar organization in the Atlanta suburbs, generated nearly \$1.5 million for operations and matching funds for federal grants over a 5-year period.

## **Relationship to the Business Association**

The MID would be distinct from the Pleasantburg Drive Business Association but the two should work closely together. The MID would limit its area of operation to the improvement district, while the business association would work throughout the corridor. An appropriate division of effort would be for the Business Association to focus on programmatic efforts, such as events, business attraction and retention, while the MID would focus on physical planning and the capital improvements intended to implement the plans. Both would promote partnership arrangements with the City, institutions and businesses. Both would also coordinate closely with city government.

## Staffing & Operations

The MID can contract with the City to manage operational aspects of the District, such as developing and implementing its strategic plan, its annual work program and advising on the basis and level of any assessments levied. In addition, the MID would have a professional staff with skills in economic development, urban planning and design, transportation planning, real estate development and finance and public relations/communications.

Initially, the MID should consider retaining an Executive Director and an administrative assistant as staff. The Executive Director would be an individual with experience in project-related economic development, real estate finance, planning, public involvement and marketing. The administrative assistant should be someone with strong organizational skills, database and writing skills and public contact experience. As the organization's resources expand, staff with experience in urban design and transportation will enhance its effectiveness. Until the time that the organization is able to staff such positions, the City, through the Pleasantburg Revitalization Task Force outlined below, should actively provide this support.

Initially, forty to forty-five percent of the revenues may go to staffing. Initially, this equates to \$100,000 to \$120,000 per year. Ideally, over time, this percentage will diminish, although the actual cost will increase. There is a delicate balance to achieve between staffing and programs and projects. The day to day efforts of the staff are critical in assuring that projects actually happen; without the staff, the projects will not happen. And while it is possible to create situations in which organizations get work done entirely with other people's money, it is unlikely that, without adequate funds to apply to its priorities, the MID will not fulfill its potential.

Other costs should be borne in kind by stakeholders. Office space may be donated either by a landlord with vacant space or by the Expo Center or McAlister Square. Printers can donate stationery. Others may donate office equipment. This again is part of the importance of the organization's tax-exempt status (the application for which a local attorney can donate).

As the MID grows and is capable of providing additional services, it may obtain revenues from them. For instance, SSRI in Atlanta performs management and professional services, such as right-of-way acquisition, on federally-funded projects and receives revenues from the projects for those services. Even initially, this may be the basis for using hotel/motel taxes for the MID startup and initial activities: it will raise awareness of the district and its facilities as a destination. This increased awareness should be the organization's initial task and will most likely consume its first year.

An important role of the MID is one of brokerage: finding and connecting individuals and organizations with mutual interests which advance the MID's goals. Therefore, the staff's experience with marketing and public contact is critical. Building awareness is critical, but so is delivering results. The awareness-building process must also be an information gathering one. The district's businesses are the MID's constituents. In this awareness building and brokerage process, identifying achievable short-term projects will be the staff's other goal. By the middle of its first year, it should identify and begin planning its first physical project.



## 5.4.3 Pleasantburg Implementation Task Force

Revitalization is a multi-disciplinary, inter-departmental activity. The City of Greenville should designate a full-time Revitalization Coordinator for this plan's study area. The coordinator would preferably be from a department such as the Division of Community and Economic Development, which has experience working with and through many other of the City's departments in order to implement programs and projects.

Each of the other engaged departments, such as public works, building & zoning, finance, parks and recreation, the Mayor's office, etc., and special purpose boards and authorities such as the Expo Center, would designate staff to serve on a Pleasantburg Implementation Task Force, chaired by the Revitalization Coordinator. It would be the task force's job to coordinate with the MID and the Business Association to assure that city agencies' annual work programs include programs and projects from the advisory council's strategic and annual plans. The Task Force would also assist the MID and business association in working with state and federal agencies to implement their plans. The Revitalization Coordinator and the district's city council member should also be ex officio members of the MID board.

The Revitalization Task Force can be formed immediately and initially can assist the Pleasantburg Business Association in forming the MID. The City might reasonably assign a portion of the hotel/motel tax to supporting the MID's startup. It will be necessary to define an exact organizational structure, finalize job descriptions for startup staffing, develop a preliminary work plan, incorporate the organization, file for 501(c)3 status with the IRS, develop print and on-line materials to inform stakeholders of the nature and benefits of the MID, sponsor meetings and meet with stakeholders.

## 5.5 Funding

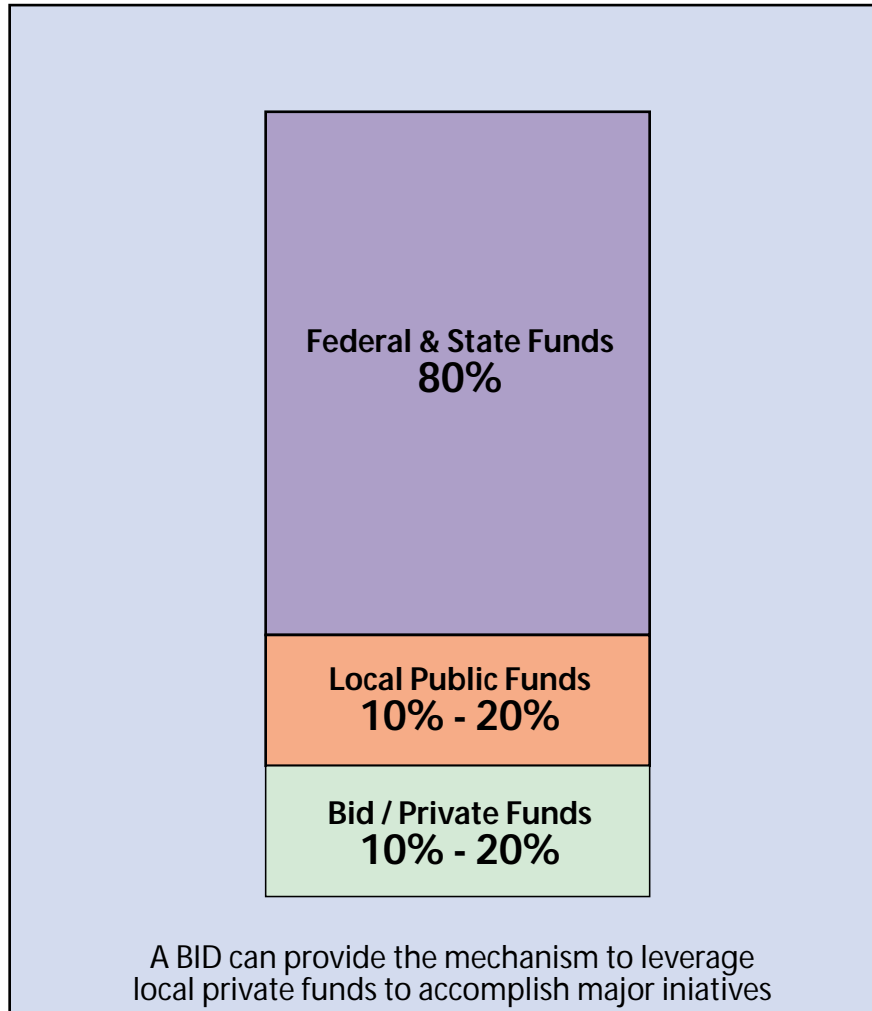
The tip of the implementation pyramid is targeted funding for key public facilities. Because of the limited public financial resources available, they must be spent where they can have the most immediate and apparent return, such as the Expo Center and McAlister Square/Laurens Road focus areas. These two areas already represent significant public investments and also hold the greatest potential in the corridor to create destinations that will attract consumer spending and private investment. This will require active investment in the key projects identified in this plan.

Three primary sources are potentially available to fuel Pleasantburg Drive's revitalization: the city's revenues from its general fund and bond sales, state and federal funds and special district revenue funds. A fourth source, and the most important one, is private and institutional reinvestment which is "jump-started" by strategic public expenditures.

### Municipal Funds

An often-overlooked source is simply the coordination of ongoing public investment in public works maintenance, programmed capital improvement projects, whether they be libraries, health centers, streets or sewers. With standards derived from the goals of a revitalization plan in place, ongoing public expenditures will contribute to the plan's implementation. Without them, ongoing public improvements will conflict with the plan and continually undermine its goals. By amending its regulations and standards, the City may use both its own capital projects and private projects to implement the plan's goals.

In some cases there is a negative reaction to the notion of general fund revenues being spent in a single district of a community. While it may be politically difficult to do so, a strong case can and has been built for such actions. The decision to acquire the Expo Center represents one such decision. That decision, built on strategically as recommended in this plan, can provide a benefit to the entire community by bringing in convention and tourist dollars, stimulating investment in projects that complement and enhance its function and provide the nucleus of an emerging district that can complement the successful investment in Downtown Greenville.



## State and Federal Funds

The myriad of state and federal funding programs is also a source of funds for revitalization projects which can meet the requirements for a variety of federal or state "categorical" programs. While many of us think only of transportation-related programs, a wide variety of others are available. The HOPE VI project now underway is one example. The Jesse Jackson Townhomes may become another, as part of the Nicholtown revitalization project currently underway.

Stormwater projects, sewer replacement projects and urban forestry projects or small business retention programs all can be sources of funds for a revitalization program that recognizes the interrelated needs of a large-scale community redevelopment program.

Funds from multiple programs may also be combined. For example, an urban forestry grant to install trees in a commercial area may be combined with a Transportation Enhancement grant to install street trees in a streetscape project. Stormwater funds may be used to remove asphalt or other impervious surfaces as part of a stormwater management program that in turn creates a new park or greenway, such as the stormwater and park improvements planned for McAlister Square.

While most federal programs require a local funding "match" of twenty to fifty percent, the match can be from any source that is not other federal funds, so local, state or private funds may be used to provide the local match.

## **Special District Funds**

Special districts such as utility districts have been in use by local government for decades. Special purpose taxes are also a widely used revenue source. As the Expo Center and McAlister Square districts grow, the potential for employing hotel/motel taxes (ATAX) in the MID district becomes more desirable and appropriate. Initially, the hotel/motel tax could also provide interim funding to assist with a MID's startup.

## **Private & Institutional Funds**

Already, significant institutional investment is occurring in the corridor. Greenville Tech and Bob Jones University have been and continue to invest in the Pleasantburg Corridor. The McAlister Square investments are beginning to breathe new life into that part of Pleasantburg Drive and, nearby, the Expo Center, until recently a private endeavor and now a public institution, is considering new investment and enhancements. This significant level of programmed investment holds unique opportunity for implementation of this plan.

We can expect significant private investment to come only when we can show a high likelihood of commercial success or when, by using the techniques outlined here, we are able to create the sorts of incentives and public-private partnerships that can bring investors' risks down to the approximate level they would be in any viable deal.



## 5.6 Implementation Summary

While this plan discusses each of these tiers separately, it is important to recognize that they are interdependent. For example, well-crafted ordinances and regulations are important in guiding ongoing private reinvestment; proactive organizations are important for engaging both local government and private investors; strategic funding is necessary to get organizations in place and productive.

A core goal in implementing this plan must be establishing a civic partnership that will guide the ongoing reinvestment and the community form the plan recommends. The millions of dollars of institutional investment occurring or planned can either advance this plan's implementation measurably or thwart its implementation for another generation by continuing the auto-oriented, pedestrian-hostile development that exists now.

Today, the Pleasantburg Drive Business Association can begin to work with the City of Greenville on the organizational steps required to establish the Improvement District and form the private advisory group that will be the MID board. Together they can also begin to define and budget for the start up of the MID organization.

The City can begin studying and revising its development standards as part of the update of its Land Use and Development Ordinance that is now underway. It may also proceed with forming the Pleasantburg Revitalization Task Force and engaging the appropriate departments and elected officials and reviewing its capital improvements program as the beginning of developing a strategic plan for Pleasantburg's redevelopment.

Together, the Revitalization Task Force and the Business Association, in anticipation of forming the Improvement District, can also begin to actively engage other major projects in the area- University Center, the Nicholtown project and Expo Center- to assure that their revitalization activities are coordinated with and complement overall corridor redevelopment activities.

One of the most important comments that came out of the stakeholder interviews early in this plan's development was the recognition that "Greenville has a history of implementing its plans, once it adopts them." There is a reason for Greenville to adopt this Pleasantburg Drive Revitalization Plan because there is as much value today in the corridor, in its infrastructure, in its businesses and its residents as there was in Downtown Greenville a generation ago. That value is a civic asset that should be preserved.



## ACTION PLAN

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## Priority 1: Implementation Task Force

As the first step in the implementation of the plan an Implementation Task Force should be established. This Task Force should include, among others, representatives from the PDBA, Greenville Tech, Expo Center, Bob Jones University, The Downtown Airport, as well as key City departments.

**Lead Agency:**

Pleasantburg Drive Business Association

**Stakeholders:**

Community & Economic Development Dept.

**Actions:**

- Identify a PBDA leader to serve as the Revitalization Coordinator/Chair of the Implementation Task Force
- Establish the Task Force and make its first priority the establishment of the Municipal Improvement District (MID)
- **Implementation Report Card:** The Task Force should establish a "Report Card" that identifies the projects outlined here, identifying assigned roles and milestones. This Report Card should be reviewed annually to track implementation, identify obstacles, and define needed project adjustments.

**Funding/Cost:**

Costs involve City staff support in organizing and facilitating the Task Force.

**Time Frame:**

Short Term: Year 1

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## Priority 2: Municipal Improvement District

A critical organizational structure for the implementation of this plan is a MID. With its focus on Pleasantburg Drive and potential revenue leveraged, the MID will take the lead role in the implementation of the projects defined in this plan.

**Lead Agency:**  
Pleasantburg Drive Business Association

**Stakeholders:**  
Community & Economic Development Dept.

**Actions:**

- Charge the Implementation Task Force to work with the PDBA and property owners to educate and build support for the MID.
- With the PDBA as the lead, work cooperatively with the City to establish the MID.

**Funding/Cost:**  
The initial costs for education and establishment of the MID are primarily administrative and could be covered through City staff support to the PDBA in establishing the MID.

**Time Frame:**  
Short Term: Year 1

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## Priority 3: Corridor Overlay Standards

Update and enhance the existing Corridor Overlay Standards to reflect the intent of the plan. These standards should include requirements for street design, site development, pedestrian amenities, and parking.

**Lead Agency:**  
Building & Zoning Dept

**Stakeholders:**  
Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Pleasantburg Drive Business Association

**Actions:**

- City staff to update standards and facilitate formal adoption.

**Funding/Cost:**  
Costs involve City staff support in updating and revising the Corridor Overlay Standards. This should be incorporated into the City's current zoning ordinance update.

**Time Frame:**  
Short Term: Year 1



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Priority 4: Pleasantburg Drive Streetscape at Expo Center

The visual character of Pleasantburg Drive has a significant impact on the image of the Expo Center. In conjunction with the planned Expo Center improvements, streetscape enhancements along Pleasantburg Drive should be implemented. A potential demonstration project could extend from Tower Drive to I-385.

The Parks and Recreation Department has taken the lead on other City streetscape design projects and should be the lead agency with interdepartmental coordination with the Public Works Division, the Community & Economic Development Dept., and SCDOT.

**Lead Agency:**  
Park and Recreation Department

**Stakeholders:**  
Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Pleasantburg Drive Business Association  
Public Works Division  
SCDOT

**Actions:**

- Define and design a "demonstration" streetscape project in conjunction with planned Expo Center improvements.
- Potential enhancements could include landscape designed medians, enhanced sidewalks and cross walks.
- Include this project as part of the City's Transportation Improvement Program.

**Funding/Cost:**  
An order of magnitude construction estimate for significant streetscape improvements could range between \$500 to \$1,000/linear foot. A demonstration project from Tower Drive to I-385 (2,400 feet) could range between \$1.2 to 2.4 million.

Design and contingency costs are estimated at 40% of construction costs. \$480,000 to \$960,000

These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.

**Time Frame:**  
Short Term: 1-5 years

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## Priority 5: Eisenhower Drive Realignment

Access and visibility to the Expo Center emerged as an important goal of the Corridor Master Plan. The realignment of Eisenhower Drive creates a more perpendicular intersection with Pleasantburg Drive, eliminates unattractive commercial uses, and gives the Expo Center a visible presence on Pleasantburg Drive.

**Lead Agency:**

Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Dept.

**Stakeholders:**

Palmetto Expo Center (SMG)

Community & Economic Development Dept.

**Actions:**

- Include this project as part of the Expo Center's Redevelopment plan.
- ***Auto Sale Property at Eisenhower and Pleasantburg:*** purchase the property needed for the Eisenhower Realignment. This allows for a significant design statement to be made at the corner giving the Expo Center a much needed "address" on Pleasantburg.

**Funding/Cost:**

An order of magnitude construction estimate for new road construction could range between \$650 to \$900/linear foot. The proposed realignment (800 feet, east and west side of Pleasantburg) could range between \$520,000 to \$720,000. (not including right-of-way costs)

Design and contingency costs are estimated at 40% of construction costs. \$200,000 to \$300,000

These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan. The City has prepared a preliminary cost estimate that assumes a 4-lane street section including sidewalk, streetlights, and curb and gutter, extending from the Tower Drive intersection to Pleasantburg Drive. \$1,030,000 (construction) + \$656,370 (property acquisition) = \$1,686,370 (total)

**Time Frame:**

Short Term: 1-5 years

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**Priority 6: Tower Drive Realignment**

In companion with the Eisenhower Drive Realignment, the proposed Tower Drive Realignment provides direct access to the Expo Center from Pleasantburg Drive and creates a dramatic entry sequence that terminates at the conference center front door and plaza.

**Lead Agency:**  
Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Dept.

**Stakeholders:**  
Palmetto Expo Center (SMG)  
Community & Economic Development Dept.

**Actions:**  
• Include this project as part of the Expo Center's Redevelopment plan.

**Funding/Cost:**  
An order of magnitude construction estimate for new road construction could range between \$650 to \$900/linear foot. The proposed realignment (1,000 feet) could range between \$650,000 to \$900,000. (not including right-of-way costs)

Design and contingency costs are estimated at 40% of construction costs. \$240,000 to \$360,000  
  
These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.

The City has prepared a preliminary cost estimate that assumes a 3-lane street section including sidewalk, streetlights, and curb and gutter for a total cost of \$882,000.

**Time Frame:**  
Short Term: 1-5 years

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## Priority 7: East Washington Street Connector

Provides an alternative to I-385 between the Pleasantburg Drive area (Expo Center, Haywood Mall) and Downtown Greenville. This connection will serve to better position the Expo Center, giving it a direct connection to the amenities of Downtown.

**Lead Agency:**

Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Dept.

**Stakeholders:**

Palmetto Expo Center (SMG)  
Community & Economic Development Dept.

**Actions:**

- Make this a high priority in conjunction with planned improvements to the Expo Center.
- Complete Traffic Impact Analysis and cost estimate.
- Include this project as part of the City's Transportation Improvement Program.

**Funding/Cost:**

City is currently completing a traffic impact analysis & cost estimate. A pending \$1 million federal appropriation has been earmarked for this project.

**Time Frame:**

Short Term: 1-5 years

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## Priority 8: Palmetto Expo Center Facility Update & Renovation

The Expo Center Redevelopment Task Force outlined an update and redevelopment strategy in 2003. This strategy is designed to modernize the current Expo Center to make it more competitive. A more successful Expo Center will serve as a catalyst for redevelopment in the corridor. The proposed realignment of Eisenhower and Tower Drive is intended to further support the Task Force recommendations.

**Lead Agency:**

Palmetto Expo Center (SMG)

**Stakeholders:**

General Services Department  
Community & Economic Development Dept.

**Actions:**

- The City is currently evaluating facility update and renovation options.

**Funding/Cost:**

City is currently evaluating facility update and renovation options and associated costs.

**Time Frame:**

Short Term: 1-5 years



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## Priority 9: Pleasantburg Drive Streetscape at McAlister Square

The recommendation to redesign Pleasantburg Drive within the McAlister Square area (from Laurens Road to Le Grand Boulevard) involves the potential narrowing of the road from 6 travel lanes to 4 travel lanes, using the outside travel lanes for expanded sidewalks or on-street parking.

### Lead Agency:

Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Department

### Stakeholders:

Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Pleasantburg Drive Business Association  
Greenville Tech  
University Center  
SCDOT

### Actions:

- The potential narrowing of Pleasantburg Drive will require significant political and stakeholder support in addition to technical support in order to get SCDOT consent. Therefore, the City working with the future MID and PDPA should seek interest and support from local stakeholders (most notably Greenville Tech).
- The City should conduct an initial schematic design and feasibility analysis in order to determine more accurate costs and impacts.
- Include this project as part of the City's Transportation Improvement Program.

### Funding/Cost:

An order of magnitude construction estimate for significant streetscape and street narrowing improvements could range between \$500 - \$1,000/linear foot. A demonstration project from LeGrand to Laurens Rd (3,000 feet) could range between \$1.5 to 3.0 million.

Design and contingency costs are estimated at 40% of construction costs. \$600,000 to \$1.2 million

An initial schematic design concept plan: \$50,000-\$100,000

These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.

### Time Frame:

Short Term: 1-5 years

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## Priority 10: McAlister Square Academic Village

Greenville Tech has done a tremendous job at turning this vacant mall into a new academic center. This site holds enormous potential for additional mixed-use redevelopment. The plan developed for this site proposes enhancing this academic center by developing supportive residential, retail and office uses.

### Project Phasing:

- **Phase 1** - Mixed-use retail & office development "on the square": Building on the City's investment at the Pleasantburg Drive entrance, develop retail and/or office development facing on the new square.
- **Phase 2** - Housing: Greenville Tech should build planned student housing on the McAlister Square site in underutilized parking lots as illustrated in the Corridor Master Plan.
- **Phase 3** - "De-Malling" of McAlister Square: Extend the "square" as an academic quad through the center of the existing mall. Utilize the big box anchors for academic uses fronting on a new central public space. New retail uses can then be developed along this park to create a dynamic, mixed-use academic environment.

### Lead Agency:

Greenville Tech

### Stakeholders:

Community & Economic Development Dept.  
University Center

### Actions:

- This site is controlled by Greenville Tech and the Greenville Tech Foundation. The City should facilitate discussion of the opportunities explored in this plan with Greenville Tech. In this role the City could identify and introduce potential developers to Greenville Tech.
- Ultimately, Greenville Tech will need to develop a refined master development plan for the site that considers future needs, phasing, market opportunities and development costs.

### Funding/Cost:

The City is currently providing stormwater and site landscape improvements. In addition, the City may want to participate in facilitating redevelopment on this site by providing funds for initial master planning, new road construction, and public park space.

Ultimately, a future MID could provide the funds to help construct joint-use parking decks in order to allow for greater redevelopment potential.

### Potential Private Investment:

The ultimate build-out plan estimates approximately 700 multifamily units with +/- 140,000 sq.ft. of commercial development. Estimated at \$110/sq.ft. for commercial development and \$100,000/unit for multifamily with structured parking, potential private investment could range from \$70 to \$90 million with final build out.

These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.

### Time Frame:

Phase 1 - Short Term: 1-5 years

Phase 2 - Short Term: 1-5 years

Phase 3 - Mid to Long Term: 5-10 years

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**Priority 11: Laurens Road/Pleasantburg Intersection Signalization**

The proposed improvements to this intersection involve the elimination of the three signals on Laurens Road related to Airport Road and the Pleasantburg Drive ramps. This is made possible by the Antrim Drive extension and the utilization of the Antrim/Pleasantburg Drive intersection for access between Laurens Road and Pleasantburg Drive.

- Lead Agency:**  
Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Department
- Stakeholders:**  
Community & Economic Development Dept. SCDOT
- Actions:**
- City Traffic Engineering Department and SCDOT to evaluate traffic impact and cost.
  - Investigate incorporating this project into existing SCDOT planned improvements

- Funding/Cost:**  
Signal removal estimated at \$30,000 per signal  
New signal with mast arms estimated at \$150,000 per signal. (SCDOT may have more accurate estimates)
- An order of magnitude cost could range from \$400,000 to \$700,000 for proposed intersection signal modifications.
- These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.
- Time Frame:**  
Short Term: 1-5 years

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## Priority 12: Expo Center "Hotel & Convention District" Redevelopment

The redevelopment plan builds on the Expo Center Task Force recommendations to update the Expo Center's facilities and create better visibility on Pleasantburg Drive. The redevelopment plan proposes realignments of Tower Drive and Eisenhower Drive to provide better access and visibility. The plan also illustrates potential future development of the surrounding area as a more vibrant convention and office district.

### Lead Agency:

Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Business Improvement District (long-term)

### Stakeholders:

Palmetto Expo Center (SMG)  
Adjacent Property Owners

### Actions:

- **Expo Center Property** (along Eisenhower Drive): City/Expo Center to determine the potential for hotel/retail development on Expo Center property in conjunction with Expo Center redevelopment plans currently underway.
- **Additional properties between Eisenhower and Tower Drive:** While cleaning up visual clutter and getting better views to the Expo Center is valuable, these sites should only be considered for purchase if they are part of assembling a larger parcel for redevelopment.
- **Other Properties:** The City should work with the adjacent property owners (Dragon Den Plaza, Carolina Fashions, and the Lowndes Hill Baptist Church) to identify and guide redevelopment consistent with the Corridor Master Plan.

### Potential Private Investment:

The plan estimates 300,000 to 400,000 square feet of new commercial development (office, hotel, retail). Estimated at \$110/sq.ft. potential private investment could range from \$33 to \$44 million with final build out.

These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.

### Time Frame:

Mid to Long Term: 5-10 + years



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**Priority 13: Pleasantburg Shopping Center**

This aging and underutilized property was identified as a redevelopment opportunity early in the planning process. The redevelopment plan for this site proposes new multifamily residential development with ground-floor retail organized around new street connections and a public park.

**Lead Agency:**  
Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Business Improvement District (long-term)

**Stakeholders:**  
Pleasantburg Shopping Center

- Actions:**
- The City (and future MID) should continue to facilitate discussions with this property owner to determine interest and/or ways the City could act as a catalyst for redevelopment.
  - The City's/MID's role could include construction of new street and park infrastructure or simply to help identify appropriate developers.

**Funding/Cost:**  
A future MID could provide some funds to help pay for structured parking or other site development costs (public park or plaza) as part of an integrated and multi-source funding strategy that could include the City's General Funds, the City's Parking Fund, Parking Revenue Bonds, etc.

**Potential Private Investment:**  
The plan estimates approximately 450 multifamily units with +/- 30,000 sq.ft.. of ground floor retail. Estimated at \$110/sq.ft. for commercial development and \$100,000/unit for multifamily with structured parking, potential private investment could range from \$40 to \$50 million with final build out.

These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.

**Time Frame:**  
Mid Term: 5-10 years

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## Priority 14: Additional Housing Redevelopment

The Corridor Master Plan identifies a number of potential housing redevelopment sites in the McAlister Square/Laurens Road Focus Area. These sites include the Social Security Administration Site on Greenacre Road, the McAlister Road Townhome Site and, the Landwood Avenue Townhome Site. This incremental residential redevelopment will over time add needed residents to the area and reconnect the adjacent neighborhoods back to Pleasantburg Drive.

**Lead Agency:**  
Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Business Improvement District (long-term)

**Stakeholders:**  
Private Property owners

**Actions:**

- The City (and future MID) should continue to facilitate discussions with potential property owners/developers to determine interest and/or ways the City could act as a catalyst for redevelopment.

**Funding/Cost:**  
A future MID could provide funds to help pay for structured parking or other site assembly or development costs.

**Time Frame:**  
Mid to Long Term: 5-10 + years

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## Priority 15: Antrim Drive Extension

The extension of Antrim Drive from Laurens Road to Keith Drive/Pleasantburg Drive will provide a valuable parallel alternative to Pleasantburg and will open up underdeveloped property for redevelopment.

**Lead Agency:**  
Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Department

**Stakeholders:**  
Community & Economic Development Dept.  
SCDOT

**Actions:**

- Include this project as part of the City's Transportation Improvement Program.
- Perform an Antrim Drive extension study and analysis to determine feasibility, cost and redevelopment potential.
- Include this project as part of the City's Transportation Improvement Program.

**Funding/Cost:**  
Antrim Drive Extension Study: \$25,000-\$50,000

An order of magnitude construction estimate for new road construction could range between \$650 to \$900/linear foot. The proposed extension (2,400 feet) could range between \$1.5 to \$2.2 million. (not including right-of-way costs)

Design and contingency costs are estimated at 40% of construction costs. \$600,000 to \$900,000

These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.

**Time Frame:**  
Mid Term: 5-10 years

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## Priority 16: Antrim Drive Redevelopment

The potential extension of Antrim Drive will open up access to a number of underdeveloped properties. The redevelopment plan illustrates the potential development of this area for new residential development.

**Lead Agency:**

Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Business Improvement District (long-term)

**Stakeholders:**

SCDOT (property owner)

**Actions:**

- As part of the Antrim Drive Extension Study, a more detailed urban design and site development evaluation should be completed in order to determine the best use of the site and define an appropriate alignment for the street extension.
- The City may want to work with SCDOT to solicit potential developers through a developer RFP.

**Potential Private Investment:**

The plan estimates approximately 300 to 400 multifamily units. Estimated at \$100,000/unit for multifamily with structured parking, potential private investment could range from \$30 to \$40 million with final build out.

These estimates are provided for planning purposes only and were calculated without a detailed design plan.

**Time Frame:**

Mid to Long Term: 5-10 + years

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## Priority 17: Wade Hampton/Pleasantburg Intersection

A realignment and redesign of the Wade Hampton/Pleasantburg intersection (the "triangle") could potentially create a direct routing of Pleasantburg to Wade Hampton Boulevard and eliminate the "triangle."

### Lead Agency:

Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Department

### Stakeholders:

Community & Economic Development Dept.  
SCDOT  
Bob Jones University

### Actions:

- This project is contingent on joint agreement and cooperation between SCDOT and Bob Jones University.
- City should continue to facilitate discussions.

### Funding/Cost:

Full scope of project yet to be determined. This project potentially involves existing Bob Jones University property, major new road construction and signal redesign.

### Time Frame:

Mid Term: 5-10 years

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## On-Going: McAlister Square/Laurens Road Street Grid Enhancements

In the McAlister Square/Laurens Road Focus Area, a number of new street connections and existing street enhancements have been proposed. This enhanced network of streets will facilitate the distribution of traffic, provide alternatives to Pleasantburg Drive, and create a more pedestrian-friendly district.

### Lead Agency:

Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Department  
Private Developers & Property Owners (Greenville Tech)

### Stakeholders:

Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Pleasantburg Drive Business Association/MID

### Actions:

- Include requirements and standards for new street connections in the Corridor Overlay Standards.
- Work with property developers during the redevelopment process to design and implement new connections

### Funding/Cost:

An order of magnitude construction estimate for new 2-lane roads with and without on-street parking could range between \$500 to \$1,000/linear foot. Depending on level on new sewer and utility infrastructure.

These costs can paid for by a combination of required private development costs and City incentives.

### Time Frame:

On-going

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**On-Going: Corridor-Wide Access Management**

Access management along Pleasantburg Drive is critical to improving the visual character and vehicular & pedestrian safety along the corridor.

**Lead Agency:**  
Public Works Division - Traffic Engineering Department

**Stakeholders:**  
Community & Economic Development Dept.  
Parks and Recreation Department  
Private Property Owners  
SCDOT

**Actions:**

- Continue incremental corridor-wide efforts to implement access management and curb-cut consolidation.

**Funding/Cost:**  
This is part of the City's on-going program to work with property owners on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

**Time Frame:**  
On-Going